



®

SPAWN®

image

9
MAR

DIGITAL
EDITION



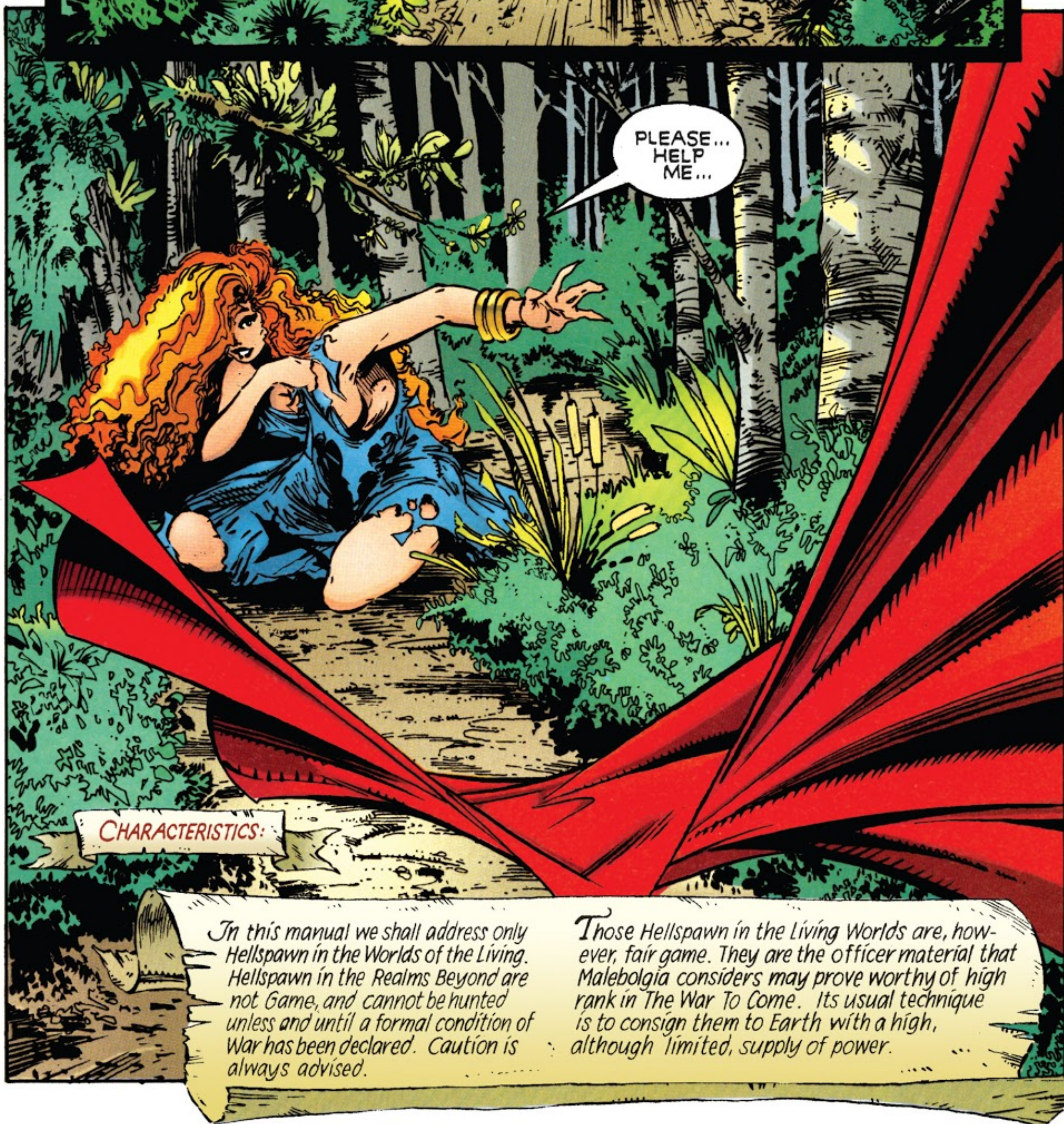


MERCY!
HELP ME!

FOR THE LOVE
OF GOD, WILL
NO-ONE COME?
WILL NO-ONE
SAVE US?

HELLSPAWN:

Identification: The livery of Hell (see illustrations pages 1131-1150 for basic design and variants) is a sentient carapace, which covers the Hellspawn. Many Hellspawn are shapeshifters.



PLEASE...
HELP
ME...

CHARACTERISTICS:

In this manual we shall address only Hellspawn in the Worlds of the Living. Hellspawn in the Realms Beyond are not Game, and cannot be hunted unless and until a formal condition of War has been declared. Caution is always advised.

Those Hellspawn in the Living Worlds are, however, fair game. They are the officer material that Malebolgia considers may prove worthy of high rank in The War To Come. Its usual technique is to consign them to Earth with a high, although limited, supply of power.



GOOD
DAY, SWEET
MAIDEN.
YOU ARE
HURT.

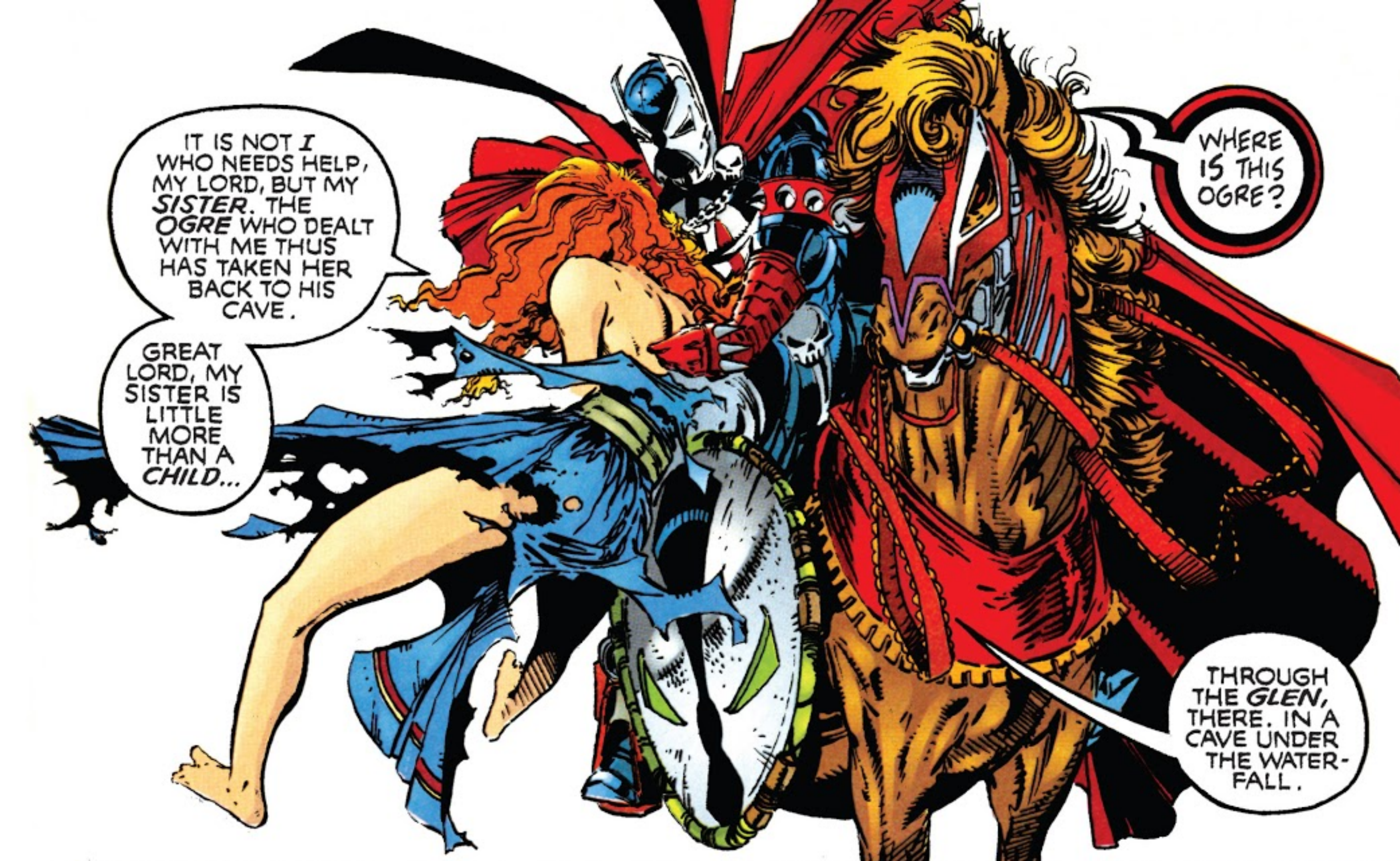
I AM
HURT, MY LORD,
BUT I AM A
MAIDEN NO
LONGER.

YOU
NEED
HELP.

**HUNTING
METHODS:**

*Young Hellspawn
make the best
sport.*





IT IS NOT I WHO NEEDS HELP, MY LORD, BUT MY **SISTER**. THE **OGRE** WHO DEALT WITH ME THUS HAS TAKEN HER BACK TO HIS CAVE.

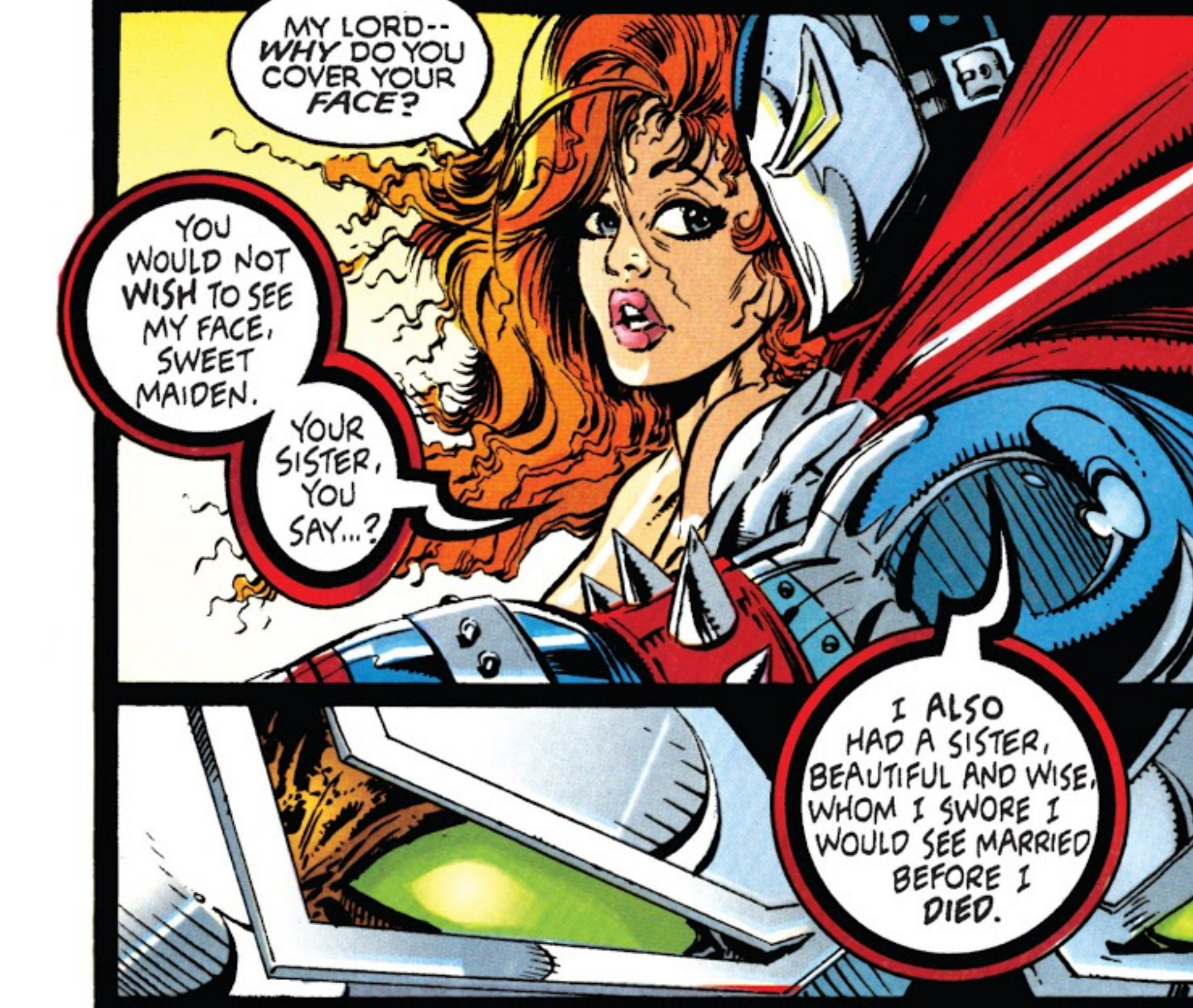
GREAT LORD, MY SISTER IS LITTLE MORE THAN A **CHILD**...

WHERE IS THIS **OGRE**?

THROUGH THE **GLEN**, THERE. IN A CAVE UNDER THE **WATER-FALL**.

Firstly, they are often time-disoriented, having been kept in Stasis fields for five to ten years. Our opponent has found that releasing them into what is, for them, their near future, obliterates and confuses family and emotional connections.

The young hellspawn are often confused and emotional, and respond to 'good' or 'noble' impulses as easily-- or more easily-- than they do to 'evil'. This tendency can be exploited by any experienced hunter.



MY LORD-- WHY DO YOU COVER YOUR **FACE**?

YOU WOULD NOT WISH TO SEE MY **FACE**, SWEET MAIDEN.

YOUR SISTER, YOU SAY...?

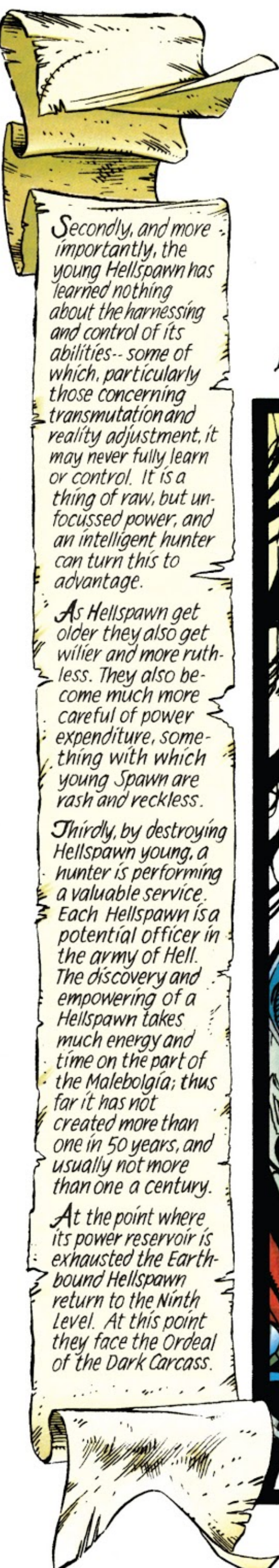
I ALSO HAD A SISTER, BEAUTIFUL AND WISE, WHOM I SWORE I WOULD SEE MARRIED BEFORE I **DIED**.



AND DID YOU?

I... WENT AWAY, FOR MANY YEARS. WHEN I... RETURNED, MY SISTER WAS INDEED MARRIED...

NOT TO THE MAN I WOULD HAVE CHOSEN, ALAS. IF WE KNEW THE FUTURE, WELL, WHAT THEN?



Secondly, and more importantly, the young Hellspawn has learned nothing about the harnessing and control of its abilities-- some of which, particularly those concerning transmutation and reality adjustment, it may never fully learn or control. It is a thing of raw, but unfocussed power, and an intelligent hunter can turn this to advantage.

As Hellspawn get older they also get wiler and more ruthless. They also become much more careful of power expenditure, something with which young Spawn are rash and reckless.

Thirdly, by destroying Hellspawn young, a hunter is performing a valuable service. Each Hellspawn is a potential officer in the army of Hell. The discovery and empowering of a Hellspawn takes much energy and time on the part of the Malebolgia; thus far it has not created more than one in 50 years, and usually not more than one a century.

At the point where its power reservoir is exhausted the Earth-bound Hellspawn return to the Ninth Level. At this point they face the Ordeal of the Dark Carcass.



YOU
HAVE NOT
TOLD ME
YOUR
NAME, MY
LORD.

I NO
LONGER
HAVE A
NAME.

THERE!
THAT IS THE
CAVE, IN WHICH
THE OGRE HAS
MY SISTER. MY
LORD, HE IS MOST
STRONG AND
FEARSOME...

I ALSO
AM MOST
STRONG AND
FEARSOME. YOU
SHALL WAIT
HERE.

Those who pass become officers in the Army of Hell. Those who fail become food for the soldiers of Hell. Either way, the power of the Malebolge has increased.

Some older Hellspawn can become quite desperate when they realize what waits for them at the point of power depletion, and will go through quite remarkable efforts to avoid battle or any further depletion of energy.

I WILL
COME IN
WITH YOU.
I KNOW
THE
SECRETS
OF THE
CAVERN,
AFTER
ALL.

IT IS
VERY
DARK.

YOU ARE A
WIZARD!

VERY
WELL.

NO WIZARD,
FAIR ONE. ONCE
I WAS A MAN... A
BAD MAN... NOW...
I KNOW NOT
WHAT I AM.

THIS CAVE...
HOW MUCH
FURTHER
MUST WE
GO?

HUNTING METHODS:

Only a hunter with plenty of time on her hands, a full arsenal, and a willingness to undergo a potentially lengthy period of hardship and discomfort should even consider hunting Hellspawn.

Hellspawn hunting is
unlike other methods
of Hunting.

Stalking a Hellspawn is advisable. Learn its habits.
The Hellspawn when roused are rapid and
tireless.

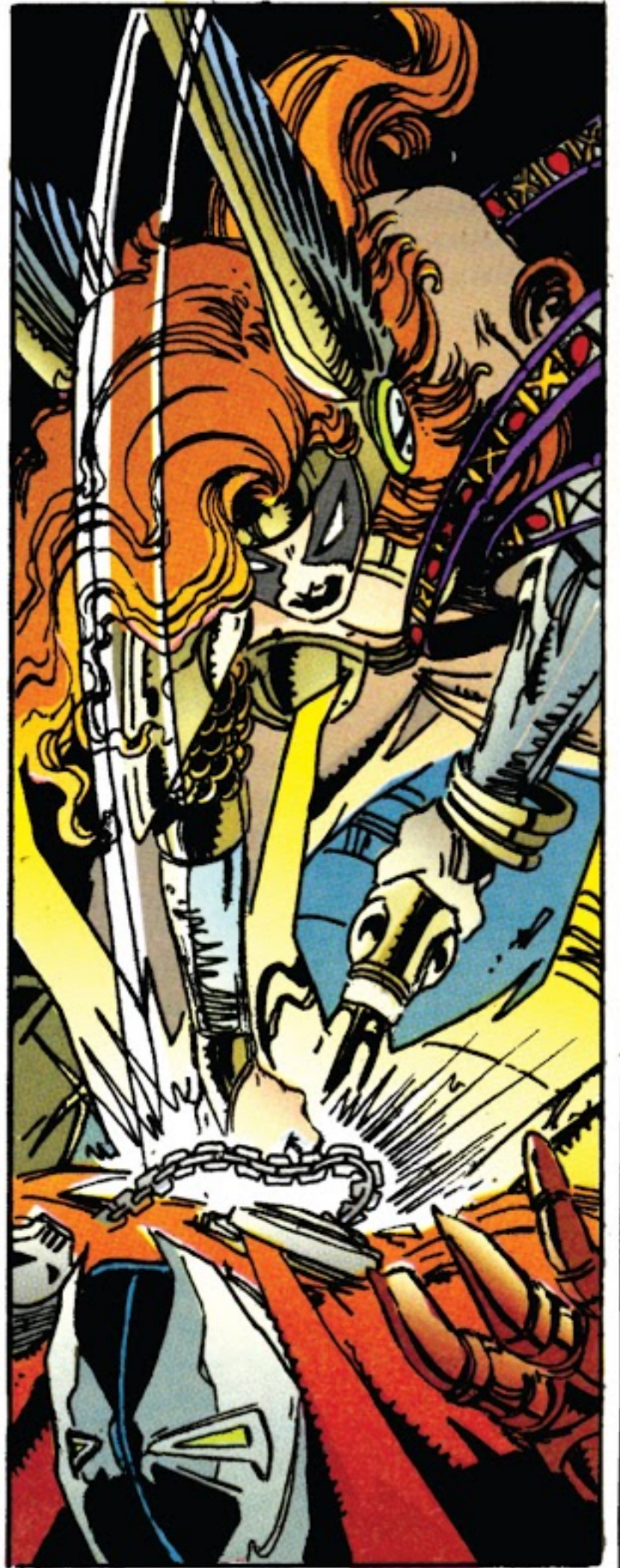
It is wise to
Decoy a
Spawn, by
diverting its
attention.

Oh,
I THINK
WE'VE COME
FAR
ENOUGH.

WHAT
MAGIC IS
THIS?

NO
MAGIC,
LITTLE
HELL-
SPAWN.

A first hard strike will often
take a Spawn out.





WHAT...
WHAT MANNER
OF CREATURE
ARE YOU?



YOU'RE
ONE MORE
LITTLE
PAWN WHO
WILL **NEVER**
BECOME A
QUEEN.

YOU'RE IN THE **ARMY**.
HAVEN'T YOU EVER
WONDERED **WHO** YOU
WERE MEANT TO BE
FIGHTING?

POOR
HELLSPAWN.
YOU AREN'T
THAT **BRIGHT**,
ARE YOU?

WEAPONRY:

A multitude of weapons can be used to weaken and goad the creature: needlebands, stoners, mutileers, and morningstars, amongst others, according to the hunter's own preferences. (See part XIII "WEAPONRY," chapters 97-104)

However, the most important weapon, and that without which hunting Spawn is not only foolish, but pointless, and virtually suicidal, is the Lance.

The Hellspawn's Carapace sets up interference that will prevent the Lance from activating. It needs to be close in to the Hellspawn before being activated.

Once activated it sets up a dimensional resonance that will lance the Hellspawn from this level of existence like pus from a boil.



I DON'T
UNDERSTAND...

CLICK

"WHAT MANNER
OF CREATURE"?
OK, **POOR** LITTLE
HELLSPAWN, YOU
HAVE BEEN **HUNTED**...

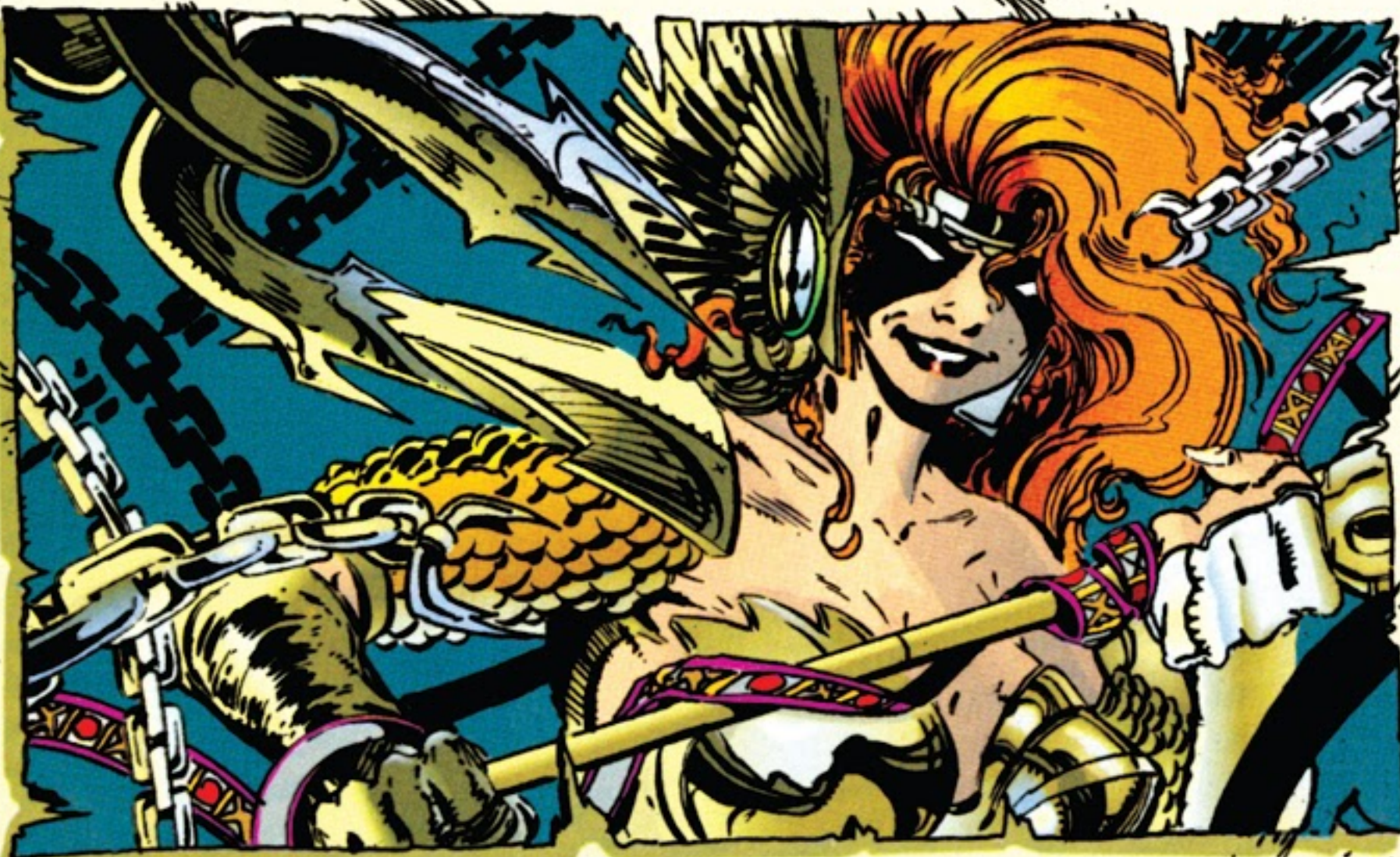
NOW YOU'LL **NEVER**
BE A CAPTAIN IN THE
ARMY OF THE
MALEBOLGIA.

AAAA

AAAA

AAAA

AAAA



If the Carapace is left behind at this point, it will be in a weakened condition, and easily terminated.

Then all you need to do is take your trophy back, and bask in the praise and admiration of your fellow hunters.





NOT A
MORNING
PERSON,
huh? I CAN
DIG IT.

JUST THOUGHT YOU'D
WANT TO KNOW. THE **COPS**
WUZ AROUND AGAIN THIS
MORNING. THEY WUZ ASKIN'
WHETHER WE'D SEEN SOME
GUY IN A BIG CLOAK.

THEY GOT
ONE-A THEM
THINGS. Y'KNOW.
**ARTIST'S
RENDITION.**

NOT
A **BAD**
ONE AT
THAT.

WHAT
DID YOU TELL
THEM?

LESSEE. I SAID,
I AIN'T SEEN NOTHING.
JIMMY D., HE SAID HE
HADN'T SEEN NOTHING.
SHERLOCK, HE JUST
BELCHED AND MADE
LIKE HE WAS GOING
TO THROW UP.

AN' TRICKY
DICK, HE TOL' 'EM
HE'D SEEN YOU AL-
RIGHT, AN' FOR A
DOLLAR HE'D TELL
'EM WHERE. SO
THEY GAVE HIM A
DOLLAR, AND HE SEZ
HE SEES YOU FLYING
OVER THE CITY EVERY
MORNING, IN A GIANT
PINK CADILLAC, WITH
A BIG GREEN
GORILLA.

HE TOLD THEM
HE THINKS YOU
NEST INNA CHRYSLER
BUILDING.

THAT DICKY.
WHADDA SCREAM, huh?
I TELLYA, IF HE RAN AGAIN,
I'D VOTE FOR HIM,
WATERGATE OR NO
WATERGATE.

I'M
GRATEFUL. DO
YOU THINK
THEY'LL BE
BACK?

THEY'LL
KEEP
COMING
BACK.
WE'LL
KEEP
COVERING
FOR YOU.

IS THERE
ANYTHING
I CAN DO
FOR YOU IN
RETURN?

AFTER WHAT
THE COPS DID
TO JOEY? *WHAT
THE MOB DID TO
FREDDY? STICKIN'
IT TO ANY OF
THEM IN ANY
WAY WE CAN...

HEY. IT'S A
PLEASURE.

NOW, JACK-BOY, DON'T YOU BE SO *HASTY*. IT AIN'T *OFTEN* WE HAVE AN OFFER LIKE THAT.

SAY... IF YOU COULD *CREATE* FOR US MAYBE A CRATE OF *STRAWBERRY RIPPLE WINE*, I THINK WE COULD CONSIDER ALL DEBTS SETTLED.

I'M NOT SURE THAT I...

YOU JUST HAVE TO *CLOSE* YOUR EYES AND *CONCENTRATE*, LAD.

FEEL IT *DEEP* *INSIDE* YOURSELF.

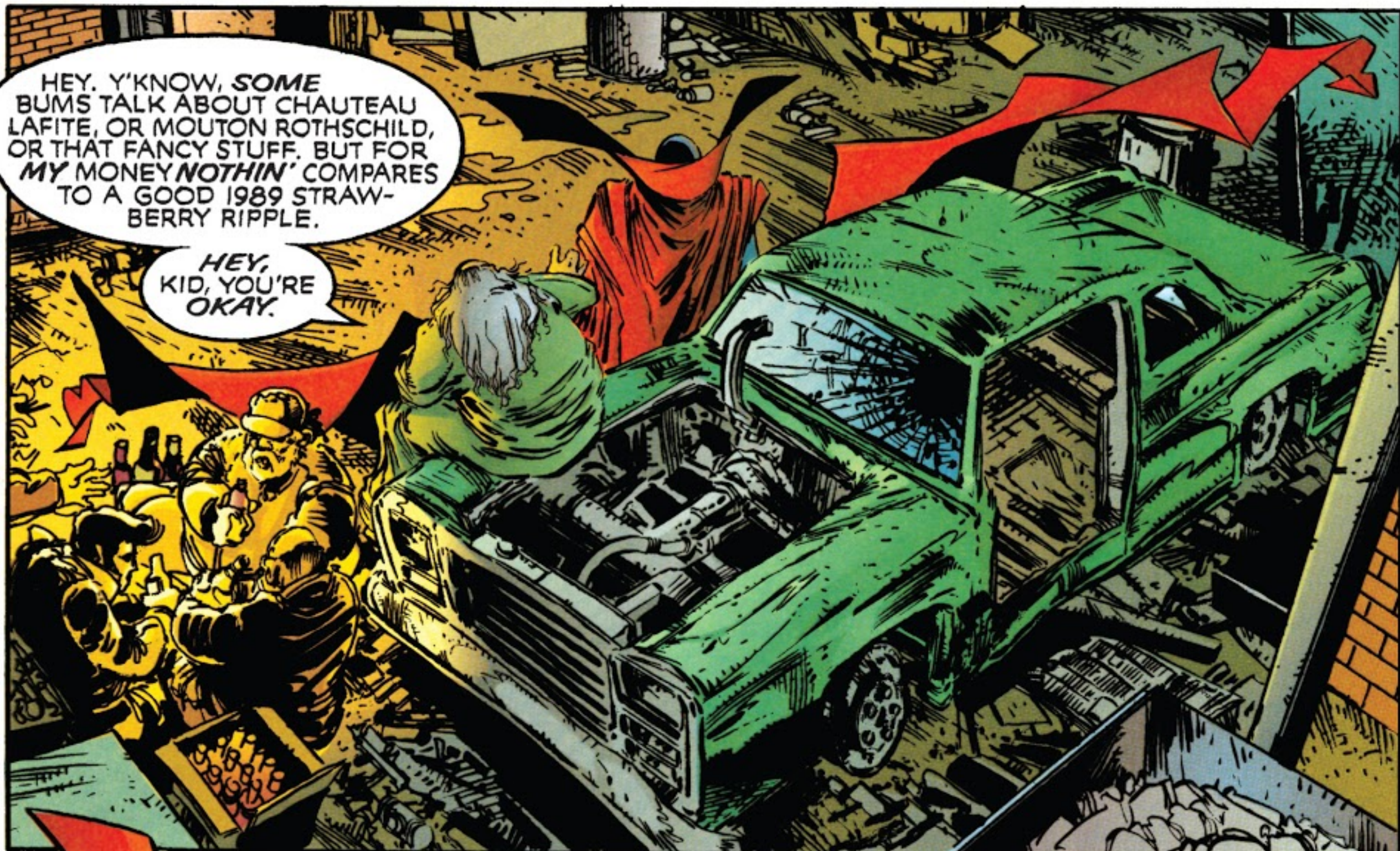
NO... NOT LIKE *THAT*. YOU DO IT LIKE THAT, YOU'LL JUST LOWER YOUR *ENERGY* LEVELS.

8:0:3:1

THE TRICK IS PULLING ENERGY FROM YOUR *COSTUME*. IT'S A NEURAL PARASITE AFTER ALL, BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN YOU CAN'T *BORROW* A LITTLE ENERGY FROM *IT* IN RETURN...

IT WORKED!

SURE IT DID.



HEY. Y'KNOW, *SOME* BUMS TALK ABOUT CHATEAU LAFITE, OR MOUTON ROTHSCHILD, OR THAT FANCY STUFF. BUT FOR *MY* MONEY *NOTHIN'* COMPARES TO A GOOD 1989 STRAW-BERRY RIPPLE.

HEY, KID, YOU'RE OKAY.



YEAH? WELL, THANK YOU, MISTER...

COUNT. COUNT NICHOLAS CAGLIOSTRO.

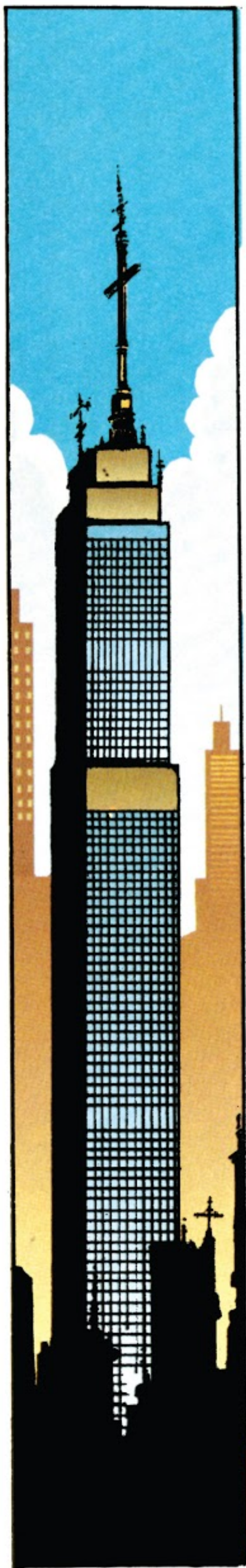
AT YOUR SERVICE, Mr SIMMONS.

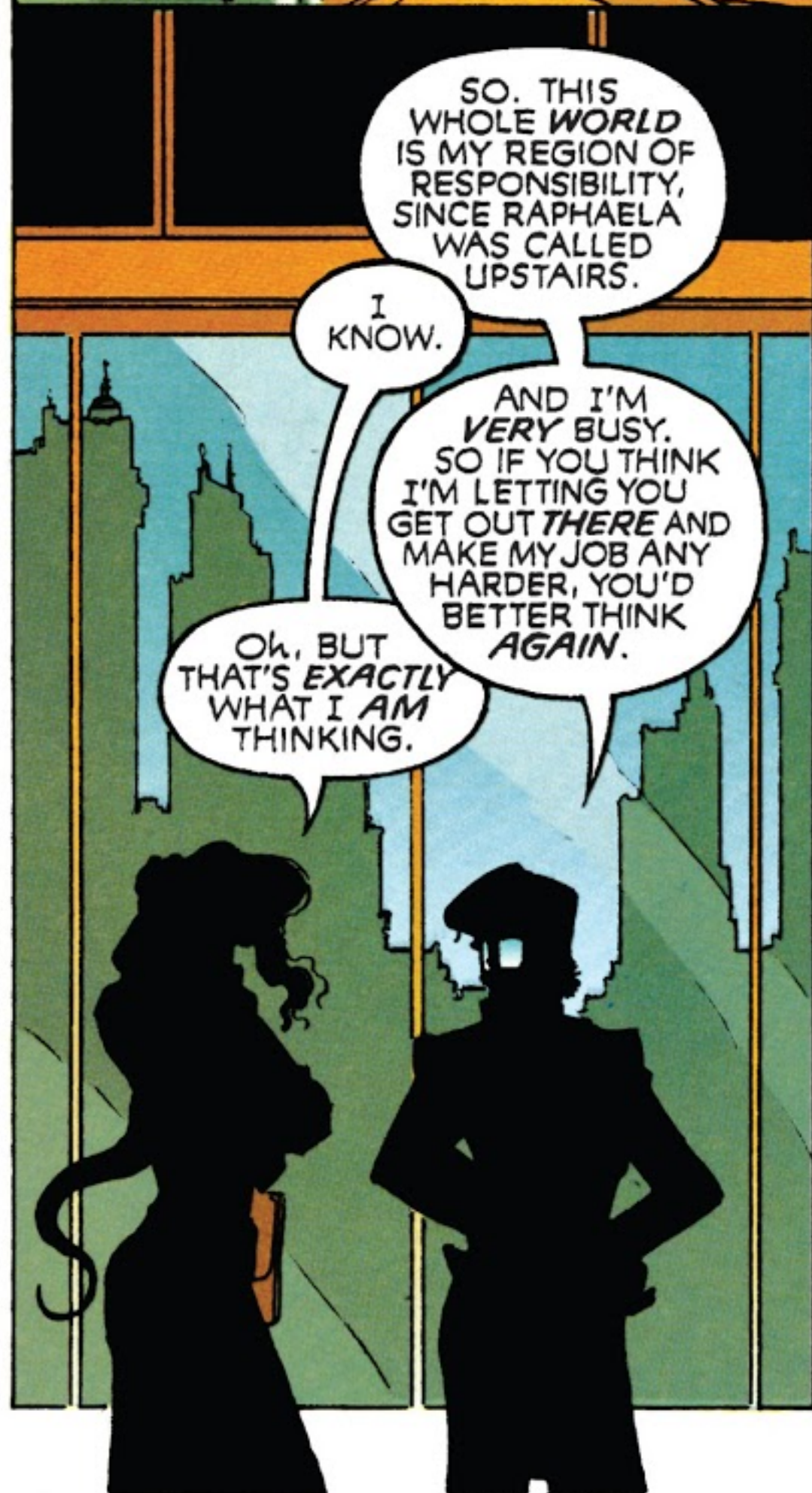
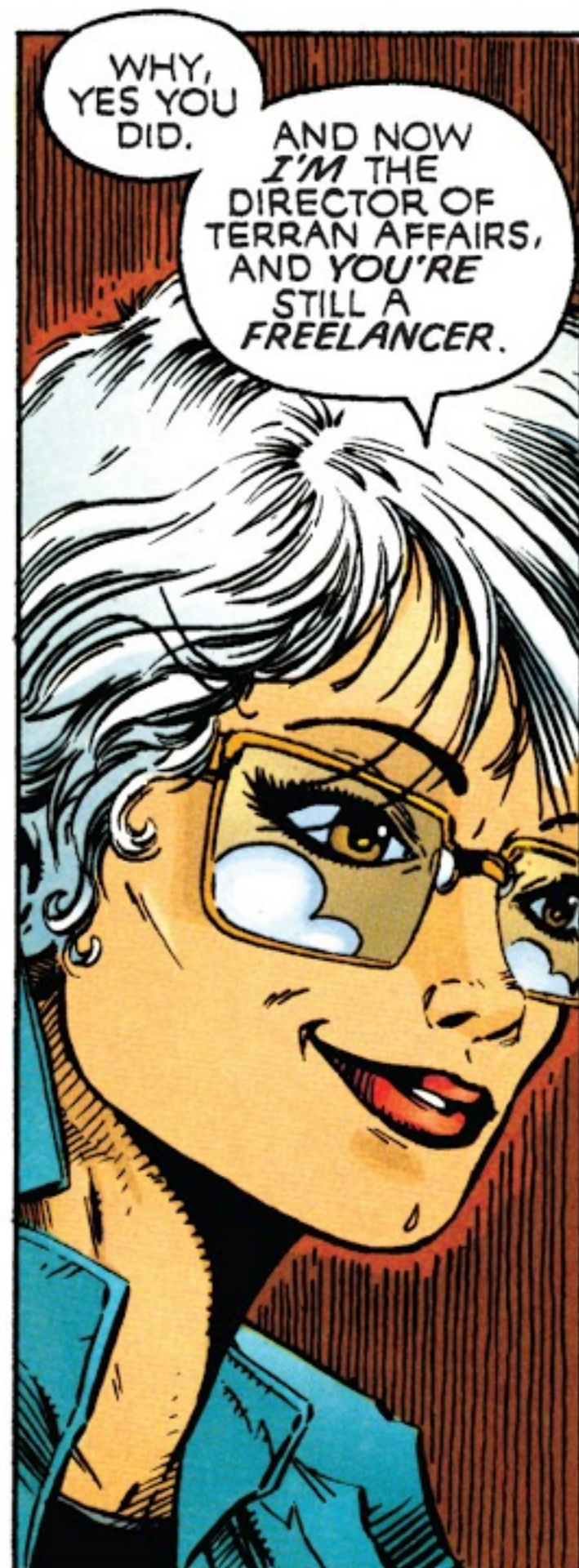
LOOKY ELV. IT SAYS IN THE WEEKLY WORLD NEWS YOU JUST GOT MARRIED AGAIN.

NOT ME, SUH. Uh-uh.



WHAT
DID YOU JUST CALL ME?





I SEE.

PUT THAT AWAY, ANGELA.

Hm. YES. I'D HEARD THAT A NEW HELLSPAWN HAD SURFACED. IT'S NOT EXACTLY *HIGH*. ON MY LIST OF PRIORITIES...

OKAY. BUT NONE OF THAT STALKING AND TRAILING NONSENSE.

I CAN'T STOP YOU FROM HUNTING. BUT I WANT THIS ONE QUICK AND CLEAN.

FOR THE LAST TIME: I WANT TO KNOW *HOW* YOU KNEW I WAS AL SIMMONS.

JEEZ. YOU'RE A GOOD KID, BUT YOU'RE REALLY *NOT* VERY BRIGHT. YOU GOT A WAY TO GO.

I MEAN, I KNEW ALL ABOUT YOUR *COSTUME*. THAT DIDN'T PHASE YOU.

SO I KNOW ABOUT THE *MALEBOLGIA* ...

THE WHAT?

THE GUY YOU DID THE *DEAL* WITH. YOU KNOW, "GIVE ME MY WIFE BACK AND I'LL SERVE YOU FOREVER." *THAT* GUY.



I SEE.
SO YOU KNOW
THAT I DID A
DEAL WITH THE
DEVIL.

YOU DID A DEAL
WITH THE **DEVIL**,
huh? YOU HADN'T
EVEN STOPPED TO
THINK ABOUT WHICH
ONE?



WHICH
ONE? THERE IS
ONLY **ONE**. THE
DEVIL.

YOU
REALLY
DON'T
GET IT.



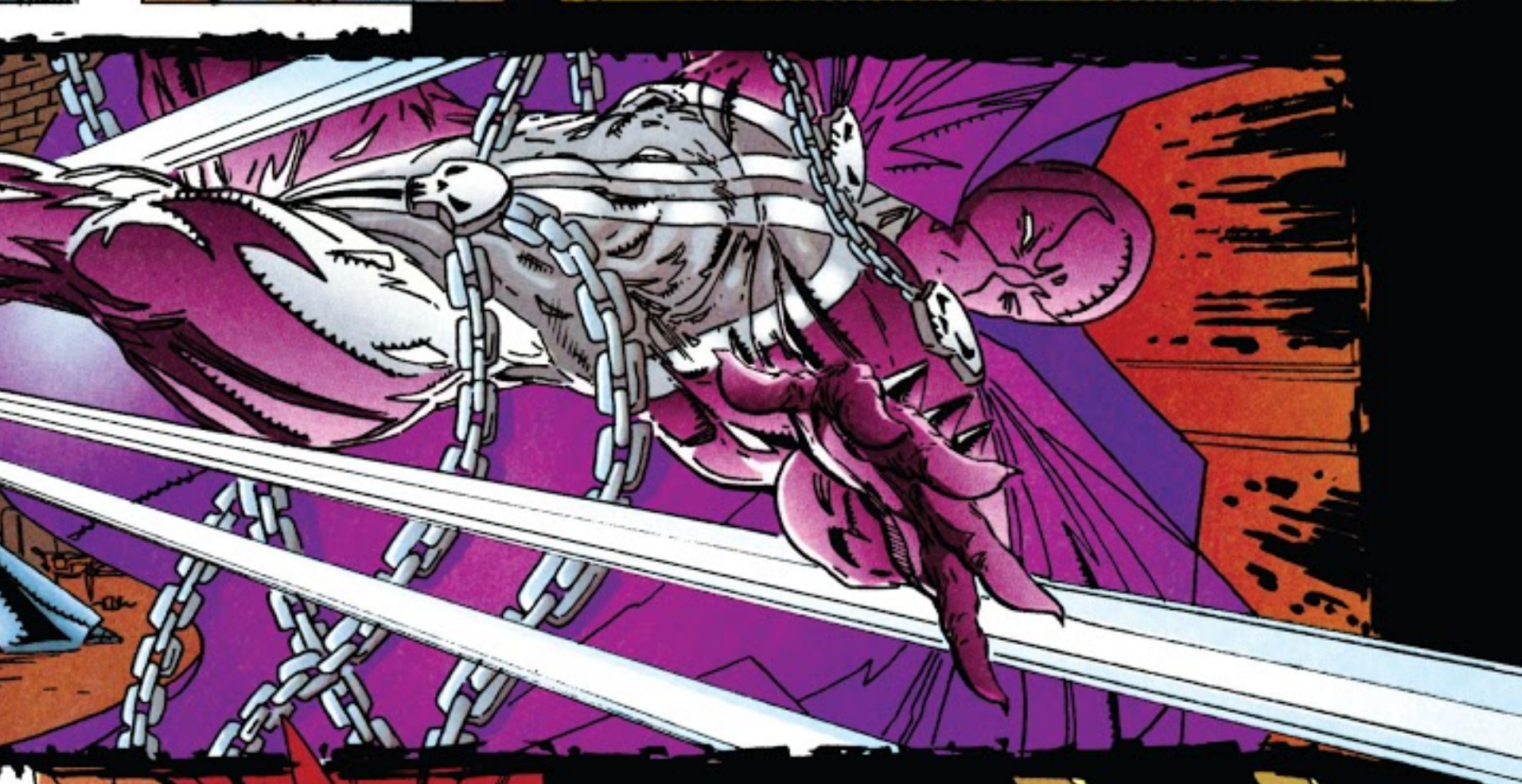
THEIR DEVIL
GAVE THEM POWER
AND WEALTH AND
LOVE AND FAME,
EVERYTHING THEY'D
EVER WANT. THEN HE
COLLECTED, AND
THEY HAVE TO BE
BUMS IN ALLEYWAYS
FOR THE NEXT HOW-
EVER LONG.

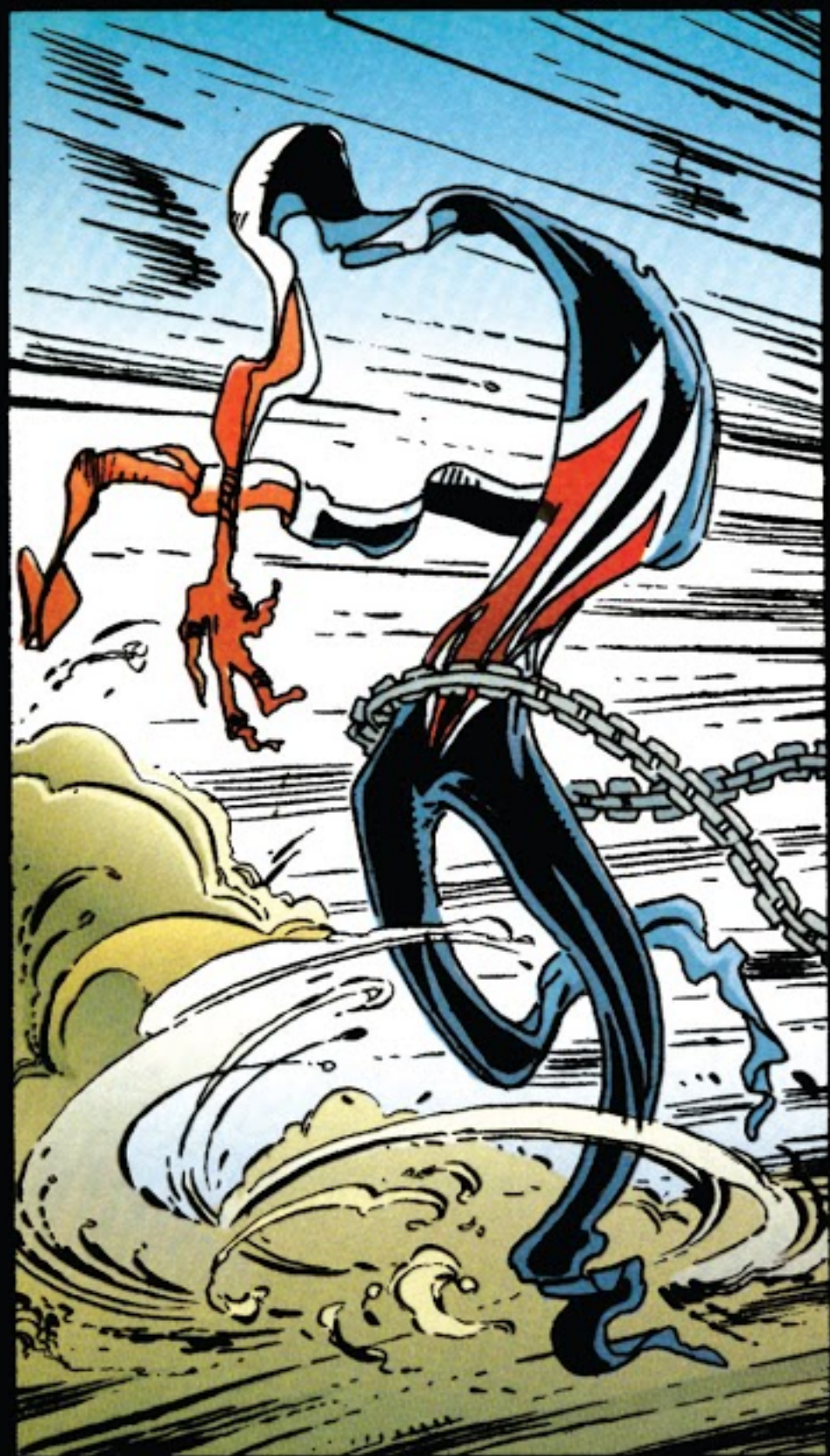
LOOK,
SONNY. THERE'S
A LOT YOU DON'T
UNDERSTAND
ABOUT WHAT'S
BEEN HAPPENING
TO YOU...

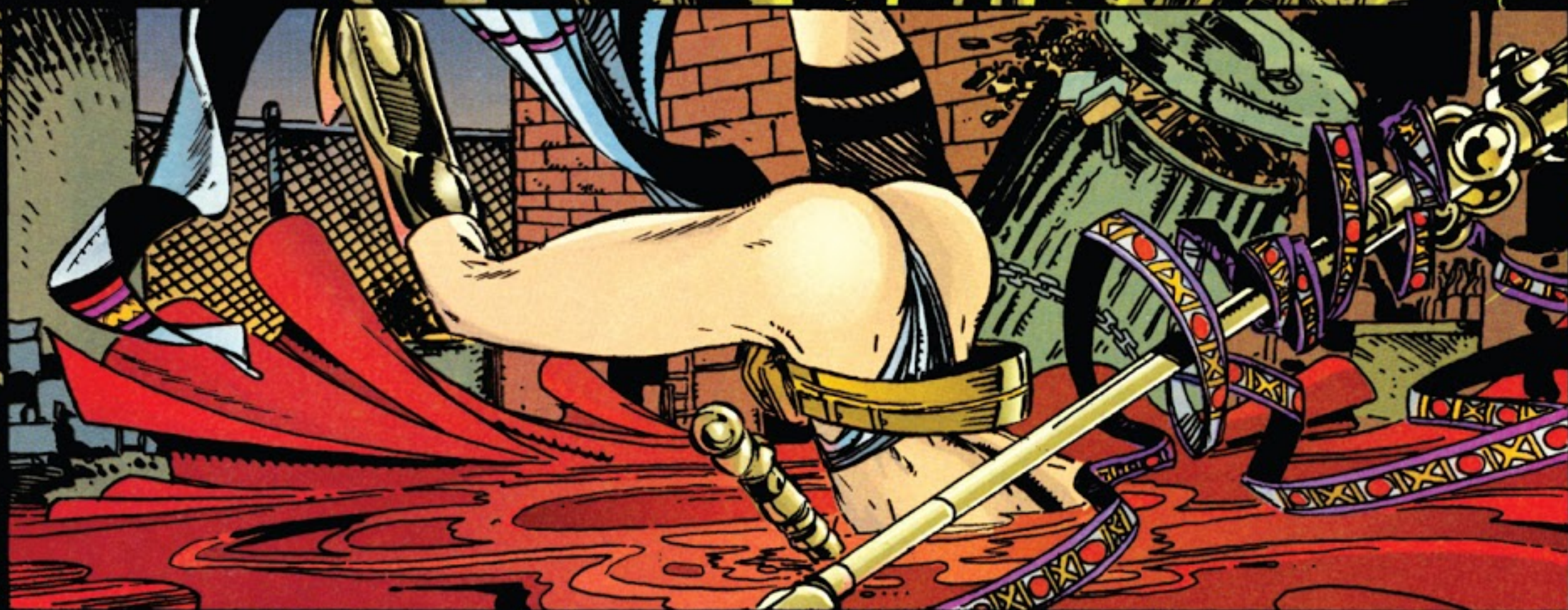
LISTEN, KID,
HALF THE GUYS
IN THIS **ALLEY**
DID A DEAL
WITH A DEVIL
AT SOME
POINT.



EXCUSE
ME. CAN WE
TALK?











HEY, SIMMONS,
THAT WAS *PRETTY*
IMPRESSIVE. YOU DON'T
OFTEN SEE AN *ANGEL*
TAKE OFF LIKE A *BAT*
OUTTA *HELL*.
Heheheh...



THAT
WAS AN
ANGEL? BUT
SHE TRIED TO
KILL ME!

LIKE I
SAID. THERE'S
A LOT YOU DON'T
KNOW.

SHE
DROPPED
THIS.

PUT THAT
DOWN. DON'T
TOUCH IT!

BUT
WHAT IS
IT? WHAT
DOES IT
DO?

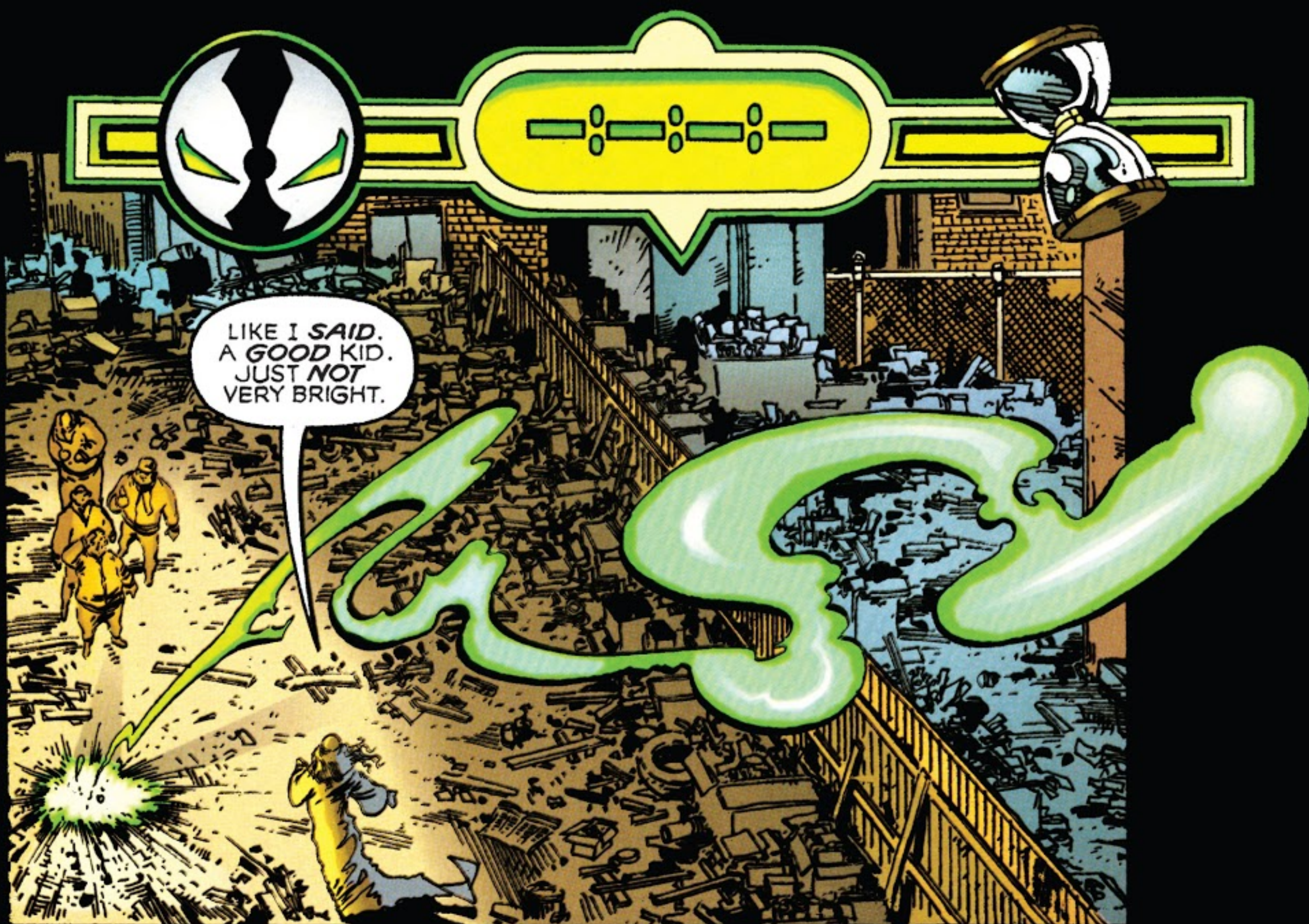
THERE'S
SOME KIND
OF *BUTTON*
ON THE
SIDE...

CLICK



I SAID

DON'T!!



HEY GUYS. I'M OUTTA HERE.



PITY. SIMMONS SHOWED POTENTIAL. HE COULDDA BEEN THE ONE...

NEXT
DAVE
"CEREBUS"
SIM





image

10
MAY

DIGITAL
EDITION

GAH!
COLOR!

SPAWN™



McFARLANE
92
QLY



I AM SPAWN.

I AM NOT
SPAWN.

I AM
SPAWN FOR
I SHARE
ALL OF HIS
MEMORIES.

I
REMEMBER
MY/HIS
DEATH.

THE
SKELETAL
FACE WHICH
HAUNTS HIS
DAYS AND
HIS NIGHTS
HAUNTS ME
AS WELL.

I KNOW THE BURNING
GAZE OF THE VIOLATOR
AND THE STENCH OF
HIS HOT BREATH.

I KNOW WANDA
AND I KNOW GYAN.

I CAN
STILL SEE
IT BEATING
IN THE
HAND
OF THE
VIOLATOR...

...MY...
(HIS)...
HEART.

I CAN STILL FEEL. FEEL
THE ACHE OF MY (HIS)
HEART BEING RIPPED
FROM MY (HIS) CHEST.



I AM NOT
SPAWN

FOR I
KNOW
MANY
THINGS
SPAWN
DOESN'T
KNOW

I KNOW THE NAMES OF
THE TWO DETECTIVES
WHO PURSUE HIM...

I KNOW WHEN AND HOW
THEY FINALLY MEET.

I KNOW WHY THE
LITTLE ONE IS
CALLED 'TWITCH'.

I KNOW THE HISTORIES OF EVERY ONE OF
HIS FRIENDS AND EVERY ONE OF HIS
ENEMIES... I KNOW THINGS ABOUT THEM...

... THAT THEY HAVE
FORGOTTEN ABOUT
THEMSELVES.

WHEN SPAWN GOES
TO AL SIMMONS'
GRAVE ONE DAY...

... AND STRIPS AWAY THE
SOD AND DIGS DOWN THROUGH
THE DARK EARTH...

... AND OPENS THE LID OF
AL SIMMONS' COFFIN...

I KNOW WHAT HE
WILL FIND THERE.



I AM NOT
SPAWN.

UNLIKE SPAWN,
I KNOW EVERY
INCH OF THE
NETWORK OF
ALLEYWAYS WHICH
CUT THROUGH THE
CITY LIKE A SCAR
THAT CAN NEVER
HEAL PROPERLY.

I KNOW THAT
THE ALLEYWAYS
EXISTED BEFORE
THE CITY
ITSELF DID.

I KNOW THE TOWER IN HELL
WHERE THE VIOLATOR DWELLS.

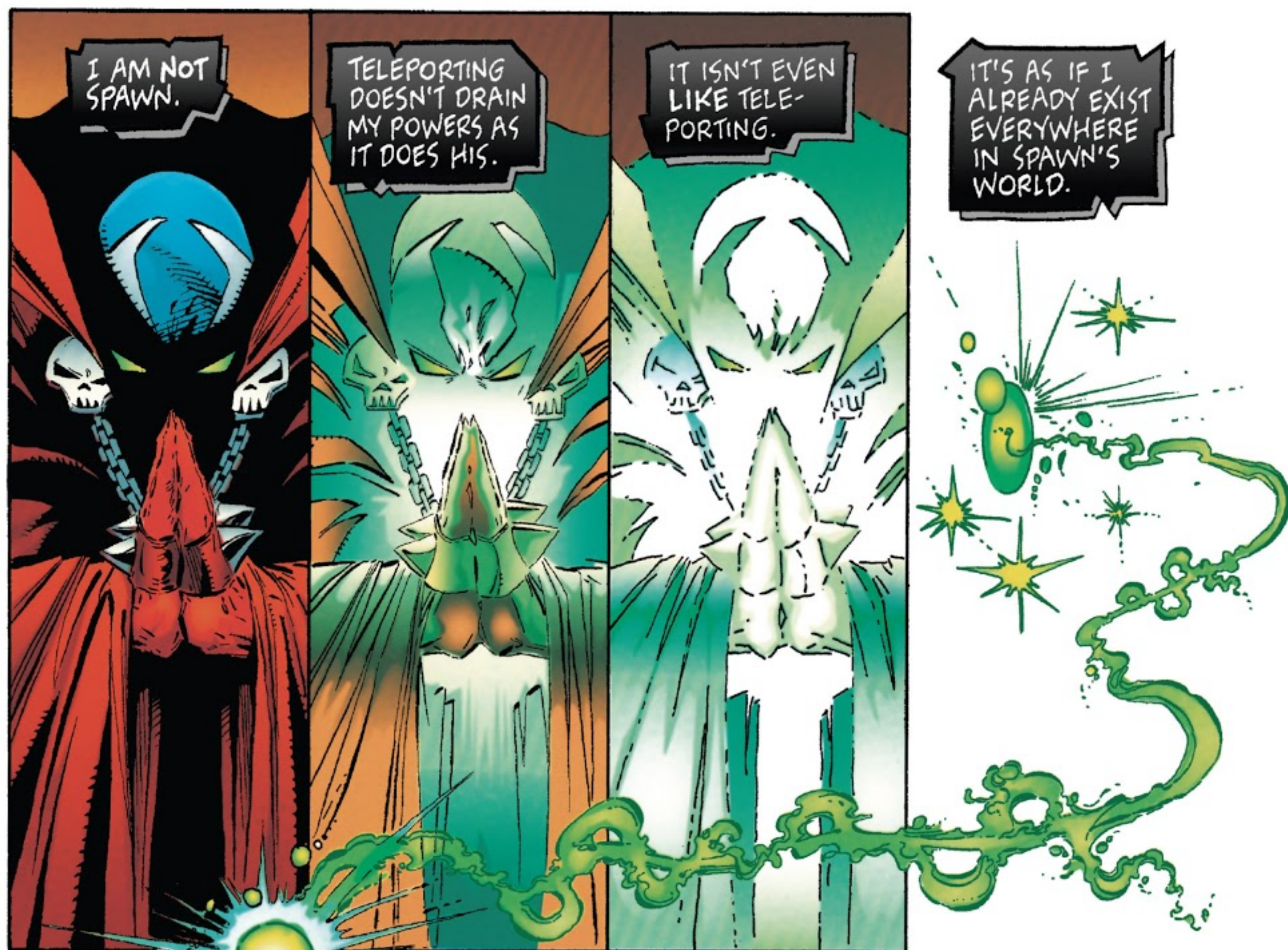
I KNOW EVERY
LEVEL OF THE
TOWER AND ALL
WHO LIVE THERE...
SCREAMING.

EVERY LEVEL.
EXCEPT...

...EXCEPT ONE.

...EXCEPT LEVEL SEVEN.

...EXCEPT
EREBUS.



I AM NOT
SPAWN.

TELEPORTING
DOESN'T DRAIN
MY POWERS AS
IT DOES HIS.

IT ISN'T EVEN
LIKE TELE-
PORTING.

IT'S AS IF I
ALREADY EXIST
EVERYWHERE
IN SPAWN'S
WORLD.



I HAVE ONLY TO FOCUS
CLEARLY ON A SPECIFIC
LOCATION

AND I AM THERE.



NOW.

NOW I
WILL
KNOW...

...EVERYTHING.

IT IS THE ALLEYWAY.

AND IT IS NOT THE ALLEYWAY.

THERE IS A LINE OF MEN.

THEIR HANDS ARE BOUND BEHIND THEM.

THEY ARE HOODED.

HELPLESS.

I DON'T KNOW THEM...

... BUT I FEEL A CONNECTION TO THEM.

WITHOUT THEM.

WITHOUT THEM SPAWN (I... HE) COULD NOT EXIST.



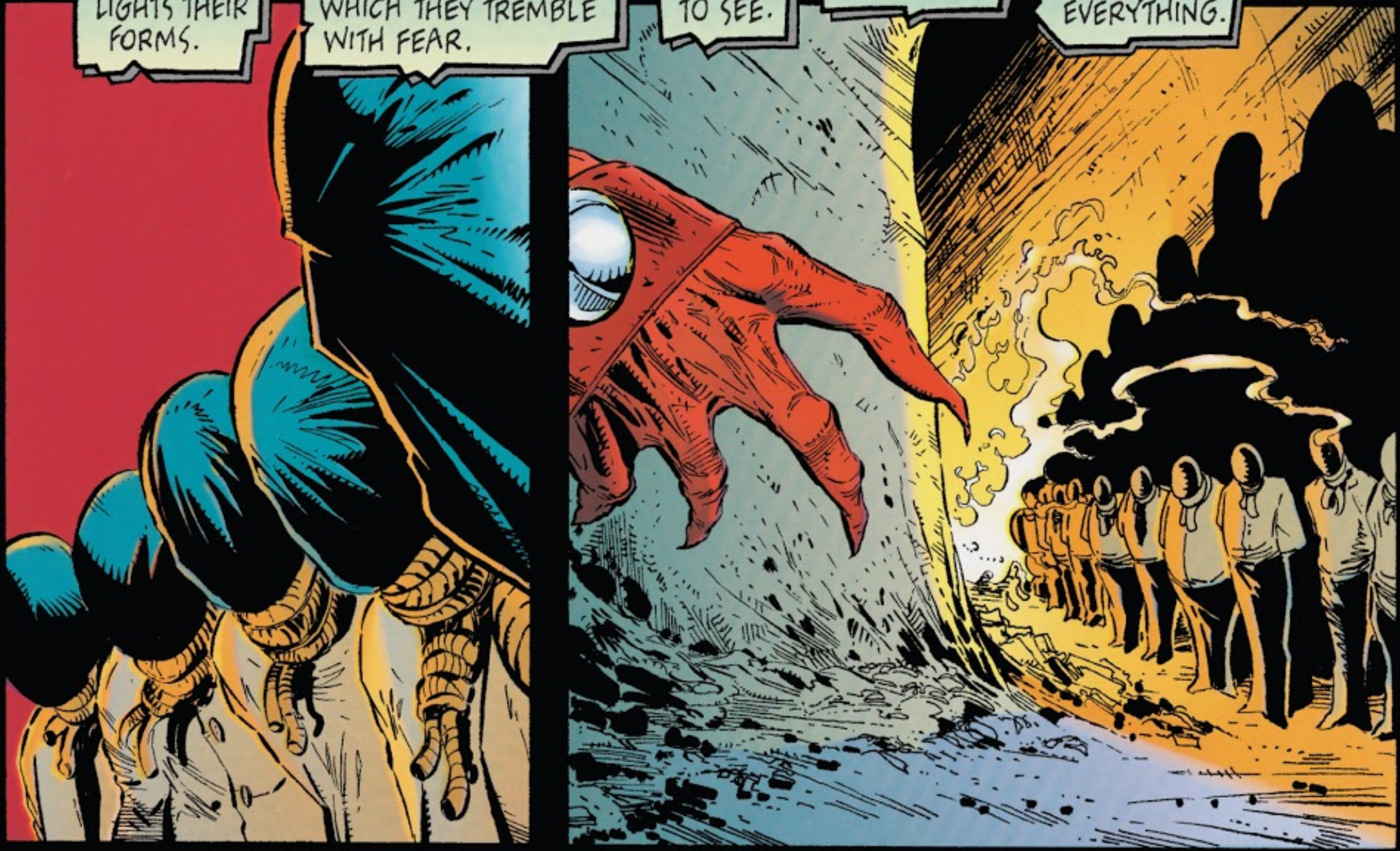
SOMETHING (FLAMES) LIGHTS THEIR FORMS.

SOMETHING (TERRIBLE FLAMES) BEFORE WHICH THEY TREMBLE WITH FEAR.

I DON'T WANT TO SEE.

BUT I LOOK ANYWAY.

I WANT TO KNOW EVERYTHING.



THEY ARE JUST.
THEY ARE NOBLE.

THEY ARE HEROES
CHAMPIONS.

WATCHMEN.

AVENGERS.

DEFENDERS.

MEN OF STEEL.

WOMEN OF TOMORROW.

GODS OF THUNDER.

CRUSADERS.

INJUSTICE!
(HELP US.)

INJUSTICE!
(SAVE US.)



THEY ARE JUSTICE.

THEY ARE NOBILITY.

THEY ARE
TRAPPED...

THEY ARE SCREAMING.

BEHIND ME,
THE HOODED
MEN TREMBLE.

BENEATH
THEIR HOODS
THEY ARE
WEEPING.

INJUSTICE!
(PLEASE.)

Nooo!



MY POWER LEAPS
FROM ME BEFORE
I'M EVEN AWARE
THAT I'M USING IT!
(I AM NOT SPAWN!)

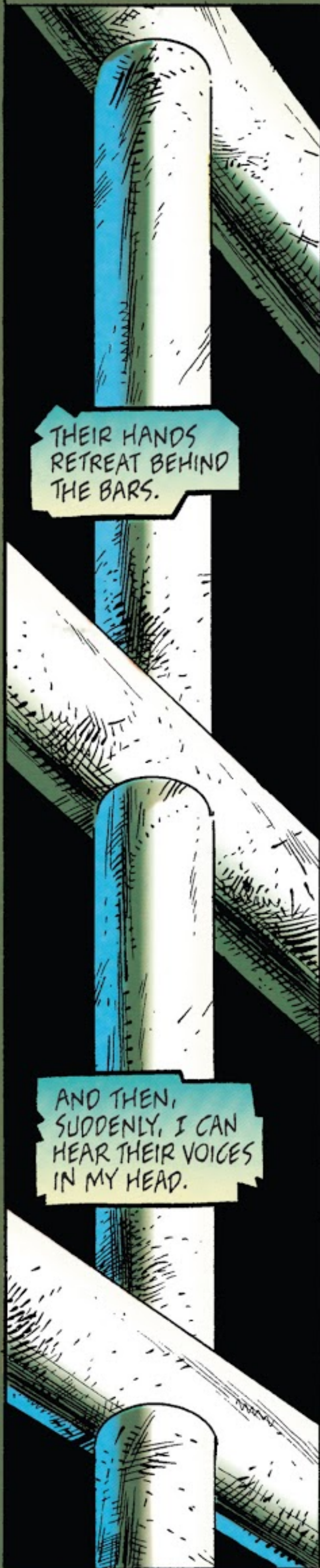
MY POWER IS UN-
LIMITED AND DOES NOT
DRAIN MY ENERGIES!
(I AM NOT SPAWN!)

UNLIMITED POWER
POUNDING AT THE
BARS OF THIS PRISON!
(I AM NOT SPAWN!)

UNIMAGINABLE
POWER UNTIL
THE AIR ITSELF
IS AS HEAVY
AS THE HEART
OF A STAR!

NO
EFFECT.

NONE.



THEIR HANDS
RETREAT BEHIND
THE BARS.

AND THEN,
SUDDENLY, I CAN
HEAR THEIR VOICES
IN MY HEAD.

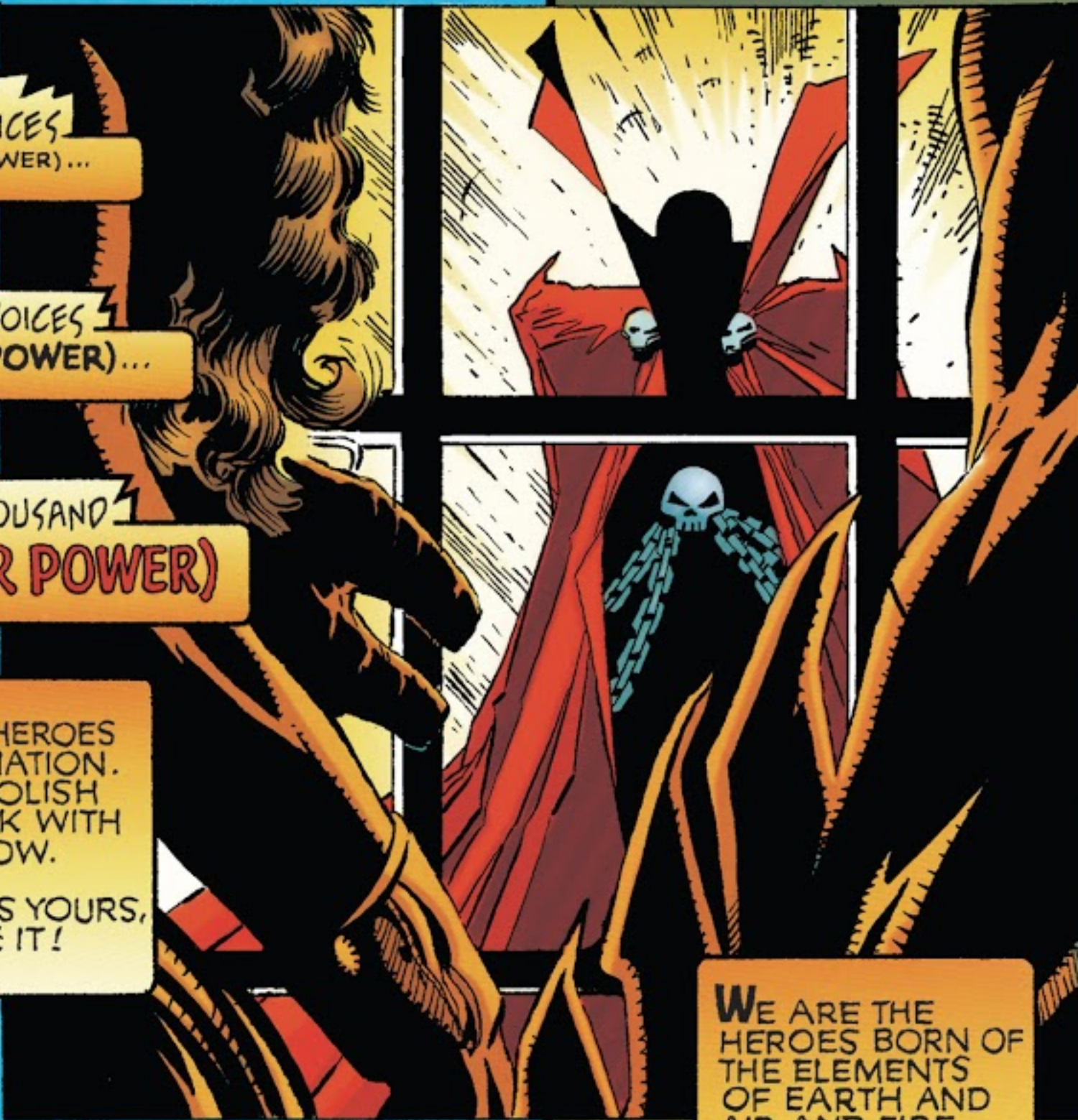
A HUNDRED VOICES
(TAKE OUR POWER)...

A THOUSAND VOICES
(TAKE OUR POWER)...

TEN THOUSAND
(TAKE OUR POWER)

WE ARE THE HEROES
BORN OF RADIATION.
WE CAN DEMOLISH
A CITY-BLOCK WITH
A SINGLE BLOW.

OUR POWER IS YOURS,
SPAWN. TAKE IT!



WE ARE THE
HEROES BORN OF
THE ELEMENTS
OF EARTH AND
AIR AND FIRE
AND WATER. OUR
STRENGTH IS THE
STRENGTH OF ALL
THAT EXISTS.

OUR POWER IS
YOURS, SPAWN.
TAKE IT!

WE ARE THE HEROES BORN
OF THE MYSTIC REALMS. OURS
IS THE POWER OF ANCIENT
WISDOM; OUR WEAPONS THE
EYES OF GODS, MAGIC RODS
TO FOCUS THE POWER OF
THE COSMOS, ANCIENT SPELLS;
WORDS THAT CAN SHIFT THE
VERY AXIS OF THE MULTIVERSE.



OUR POWER IS
YOURS, SPAWN.

TAKE IT!



AND THEN... A LONE VOICE.
A VOICE FILLED WITH HOPE
AND WITH GREAT CARING.
STRONG AND NOBLE. THE
VOICE OF HE WHO CAME FIRST.

"MY PLANET EXPLODED
AND I WAS SENT TO
EARTH AS AN INFANT."

THE VOICE
IS CALM.

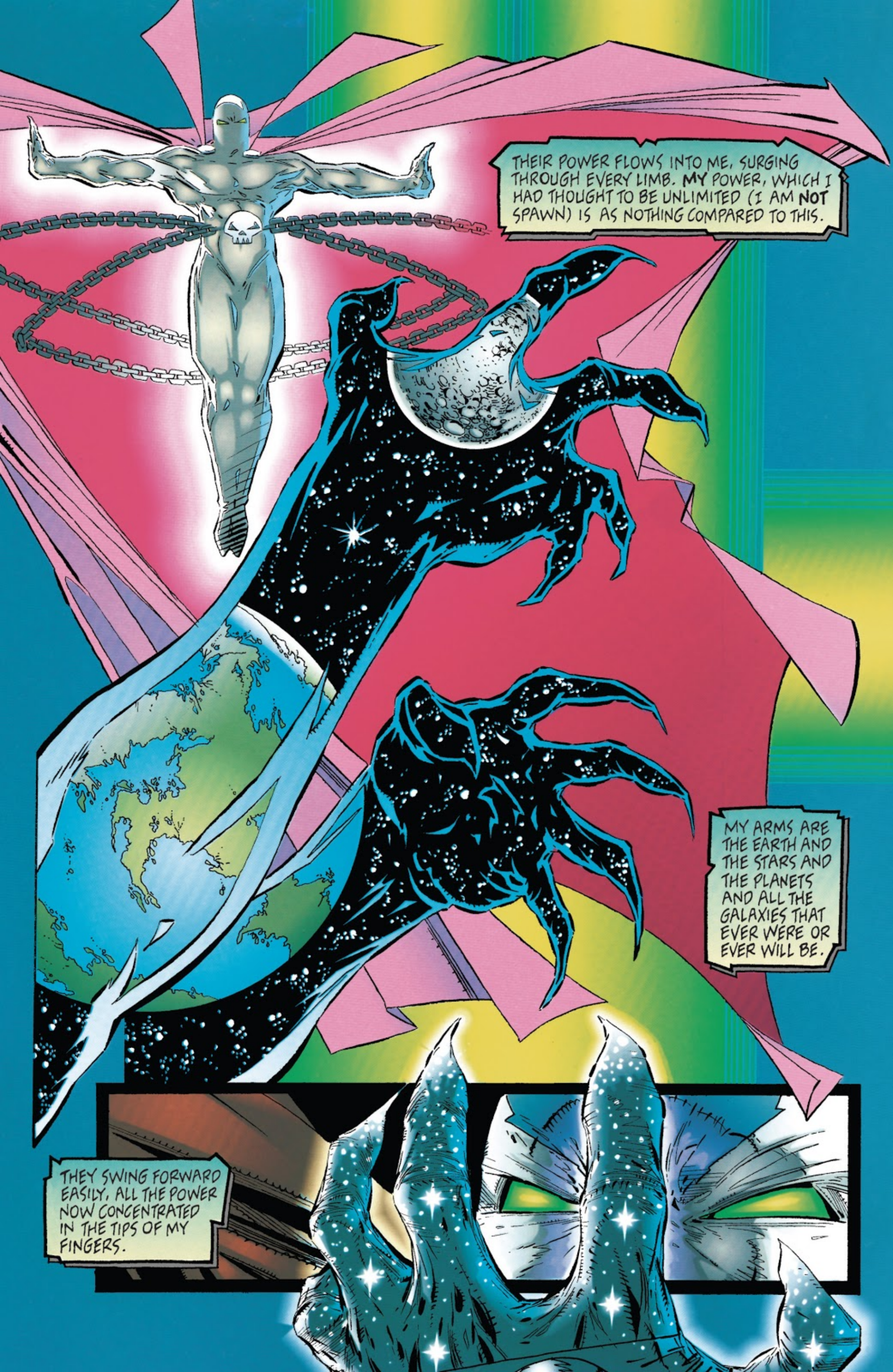
"IT'S UP TO YOU,
SPAWN. IT'S
NOW OR NEVER."

"MY POWER IS
YOURS, SPAWN."

"TAKE IT."

IN MY MIND, HE
WINKS AT ME
AND FLASHES A
BROAD SMILE.

BENEATH MY MASK,
I SMILE BACK AND
NOD, SILENTLY.



THEIR POWER FLOWS INTO ME, SURGING THROUGH EVERY LIMB. MY POWER, WHICH I HAD THOUGHT TO BE UNLIMITED (I AM NOT SPAWN) IS AS NOTHING COMPARED TO THIS.

MY ARMS ARE THE EARTH AND THE STARS AND THE PLANETS AND ALL THE GALAXIES THAT EVER WERE OR EVER WILL BE.

THEY SWING FORWARD EASILY, ALL THE POWER NOW CONCENTRATED IN THE TIPS OF MY FINGERS.



AND I STRIKE.

NO EFFECT.

NONE.

IT IS THE VIOLATOR
(IT IS **NOT** THE VIOLATOR).
A WOMAN'S FIGURE WITH
THE VIOLATOR'S HEAD,
BLIND-FOLDED; HOLDING
A SET OF SCALES.

IN ONE OF THE PANS,
ALL THE WEALTH OF
THE WORLD.

IN THE OTHER A
BLACK, SHRIVELLED
HEART, AWASH
IN TEARS.

YOU
FAILED,
BUDDY
BOY!

YOU
FAILED!
HA HA
HA HA
HA HA

YOU
FAILED
!

YOU
FAILED!

YOU
FAILED
!

YOU
FAILED
!!

HE WEARS A LONG DRESS
MADE OF DOLLAR BILLS.

THERE MUST BE A
BILLION OF THEM.

MORE,
PROBABLY.





AND THEN THE VIOLATOR (NOT THE VIOLATOR) IS GONE AND THERE IS ONLY ME (I AM NOT SPAWN) AND THE LINE OF HOODED MEN BEHIND ME...

...WEEPING, SOFTLY.

BEHIND THE BARS, THE STAR-CHILD; HE-WHO-CAME-FIRST; THE ONE WHO IS THE BASIS FOR US... FOR ALL OF US... SAYS ONE WORD:

DOOMSDAY.

THERE IS NO FEAR IN HIS VOICE. NO DESPAIR. IT IS A SIMPLE STATEMENT OF FACT.

AND THEN ALL IS QUIET.

THE SILENCE IS DEAFENING.

THE SILENCE IS AGONY.



SPAWN.



C'MON.

LET'S GO.



BUT I HAVE TO SAVE THEM! I...



YOU CAN'T.

IT'S BEST NOT TO THINK ABOUT IT.

CEREBUS HAS BEEN HERE FIFTEEN YEARS.

CEREBUS KNOWS.



WHO...

WHO ARE THEY?

SUPER-HEROES.

LIKE YOU.



AND... THESE MEN...?

THEIR CREATORS. THE ONES WHO SOLD THEM.

LIKE CEREBUS SAID.

IT'S BEST NOT TO THINK ABOUT IT.



SPAWN.



C'MON.

LET'S GO.



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CEREBUS HAS BEEN HERE FIFTEEN YEARS.

CEREBUS KNOWS.



WHO...

WHO ARE THEY?

SUPER-HEROES.

LIKE YOU.



AND... THESE MEN...?

THEIR CREATORS. THE ONES WHO SOLD THEM.

LIKE CEREBUS SAID.

IT'S BEST NOT TO THINK ABOUT IT.



SPAWN.



C'MON.

LET'S GO.



BUT I HAVE TO SAVE THEM! I...



YOU CAN'T.

IT'S BEST NOT TO THINK ABOUT IT.

CEREBUS HAS BEEN HERE FIFTEEN YEARS.

CEREBUS KNOWS.



WHO...

WHO ARE THEY?

SUPER-HEROES.

LIKE YOU.



AND... THESE MEN...?

THEIR CREATORS. THE ONES WHO SOLD THEM.

LIKE CEREBUS SAID.

IT'S BEST NOT TO THINK ABOUT IT.





WHAT A
BEAUTIFUL
HOUSE...

YEAH.
WELCOME
HOME.



HOME?
MY
HOME?!

SUNKEN
LIVING ROOM.
A WHOLE
BUNCH OF
BEDROOMS.
FIREPLACE.
GRAND
PIANO.



GREAT
VIEW OF
MOUNT
HOOD.
HOT TUB.
SATELLITE
DISH.

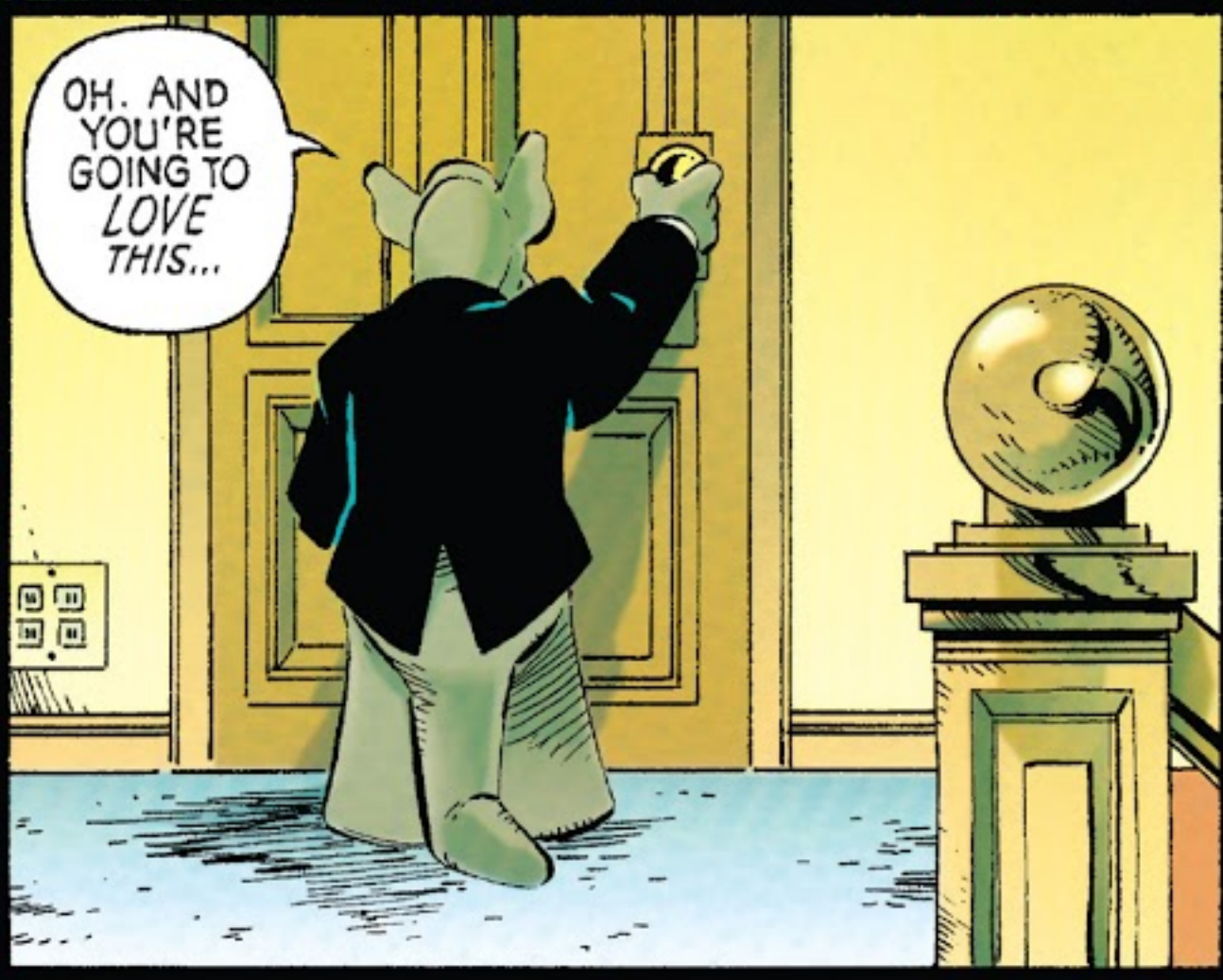


AND
ABOUT A
MILLION
HOCKEY
CARDS.

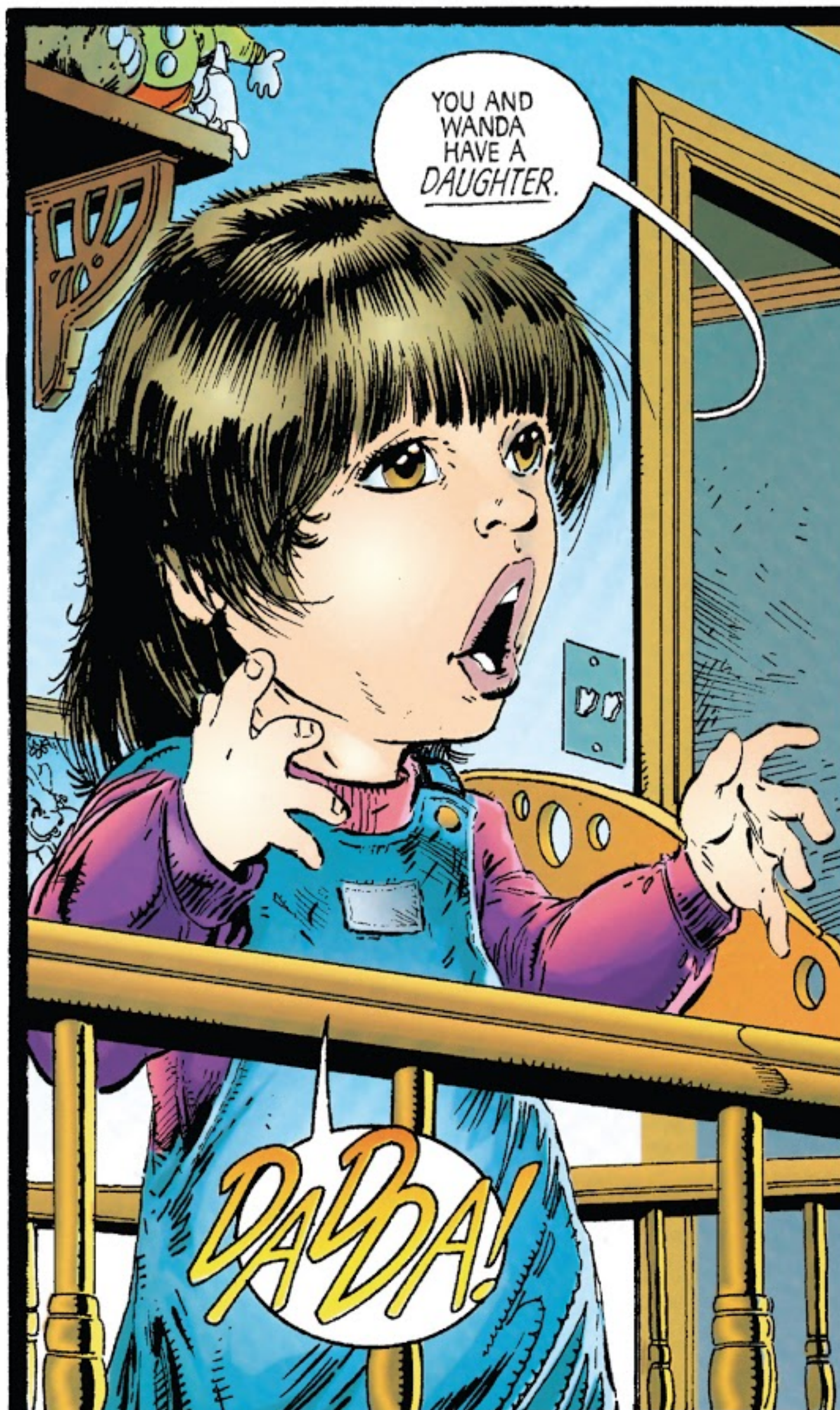


YOUR
WIFE
WILL BE
HOME SOON.
HER NAME'S
WANDA, TOO.
NO BIG
SURPRISE.

SHE'S
A HIGH
SCHOOL
TEACHER.
A REAL
LOOKER,
TOO. YOU'LL
SEE.



OH. AND
YOU'RE
GOING TO
LOVE
THIS...







HELLO?
WHO?

OH.



IT'S
FOR
YOU.



HELLO?
HEY, MIKE.
WHUSSUP?

YEAH YEAH,
SURE... I'LL BE
IN AFTER THE
LEAF GAME.

YEAH... THEY'RE
AT HOME WITH
DETROIT THIS
WEEKEND.

YEAH.
I'LL
SEE YOU
THEN.

LATER.

DADDY'S
HOME, BABY.
DADDY'S
HOME.



THANKS
FOR THE
INVITE,
SPAWN,
BUT... uh...
FOUR'S A
CROWD,
Y'KNOW.



LISTEN...
I... uh...
THANKS.



DON'T
MENTION
IT. TELL
WANDA
CEREBUS
SAYS
"HI"...

I SURE
WILL.



I SURE
WILL.



SPAWN

is trademark
and copyright
Todd McFarlane

CEREBUS

is trademark
and copyright
Dave Sim

Forever

NEXT: **FRANK MILLER**





®

SPAWN

®

image

**11
JUN**

DIGITAL
EDITION



NOW, LET'S GET
BACK TO REALITY.

SPAWN'S BEEN HAVING
NIGHTMARES.

THAT'S THE ONLY
EXPLANATION.

AL! FOR
CHRISSAKE,
BUDDY!

**SNAP
OUT
OF IT!**

YEEAAHKG!

GGREAYAHH!!

IT AIN'T REAL,
BOY! COME ON!
THEY'LL CALL THE
COPS ON US!

HE'S
GOT IT
BAD,
YES HE
DOES.

SORRY
ABOUT
THIS, AL.

SPAKK

BLARGG!

YUURGGG!

hnh?
?

BOBBY.

AND
BOOTS.

GUYS.
IT'S
YOU.

THANK
GOD.

Oh, MOTHER. THAT
WAS TOO DAMN WEIRD.
DEMONS AND NEW AGE
GIRLS AND REALLY MEAN
ANGELS AND A TALKING
AARDVARK...

HE
SMOKED.
TOO

... A TALKING
AARDVARK...



AARDVARK, huh? WITH ME IT'S USUALLY RATS AND LIZARDS. AND BEETLES. I GET A LOT OF BEETLES.

I MOSTLY GET BATS.

BUT I DON'T **DRINK**, DAMN IT!

SORRY, I'M HAVING A ROUGH TIME.

YOU KNOW, BIG GUY, WE'VE BEEN HANGING OUT FOR A WHILE NOW-- BUT I AIN'T HEARD SO MUCH AS A *SOB STORY* OUTTA YOU. NOT SO MUCH AS A *SHE DONE ME WRONG*.

I DON'T MEAN TO POKE MY NOSE WHERE IT DON'T BELONG, BUT WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?

IT'S THE *WINE*, YES IT IS.

THAT'S A LONG STORY. AND IT DOESN'T HAVE A PUNCHLINE. LET'S JUST SAY THAT ALL I KNOW IS THAT I'M KIND OF LIKE *BOOTS*, OVER THERE.

HE'S SO IN LOVE WITH THOSE *BOOTS* OF HIS, THAT'S WHAT WE CALL HIM. THEY'RE ALL HE'S GOT, SO HE TAKES CARE OF THEM.

AND ALL I'VE GOT IS YOU GUYS AND THIS ALLEY. YOU'RE MY FRIENDS-- AND THIS IS MY HOME.





SPAGHETTI SAUCE. THE LUMPY KIND. THAT'S WHAT THEY'D BOTH BE IF AL SIMMONS WERE STILL ALIVE. STILL HUMAN.

BUT FOR THE GIRL, IT DOESN'T MAKE A SPECK OF DIFFERENCE.





MAYBE
I'LL KILL YOU
TOO, YOU DRUNK
OLD TURD.

I GOT A
CASE OF THE
NASTIES
TONIGHT.



ME TOO.



BAD
CASE.

YOUR
FAULT.

AL.

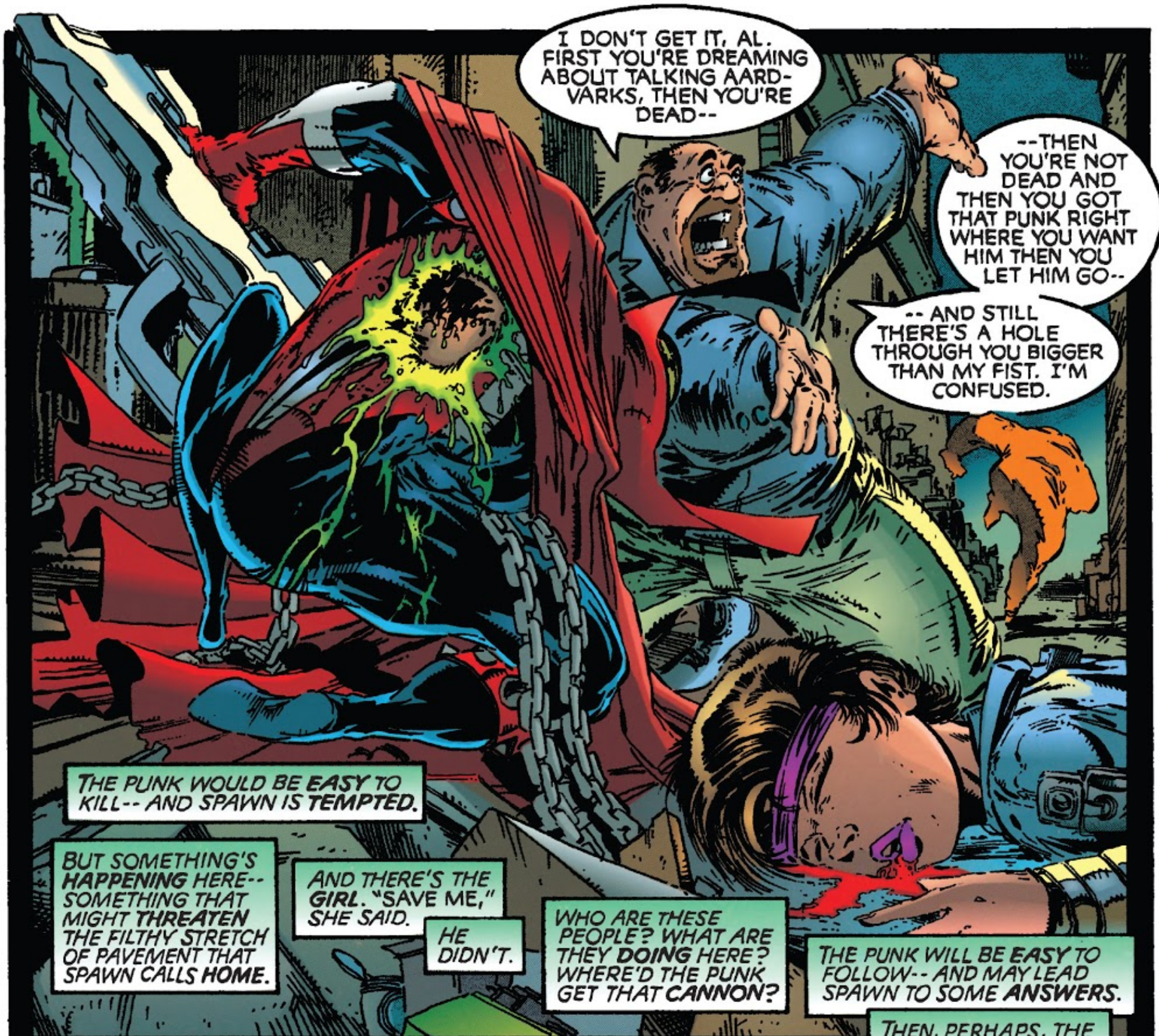
JEEZ
LOUISE.

THIS

CAN'T

BE

HAPPENING.



I DON'T GET IT, AL. FIRST YOU'RE DREAMING ABOUT TALKING AARD-VARKS, THEN YOU'RE DEAD--

--THEN YOU'RE NOT DEAD AND THEN YOU GOT THAT PUNK RIGHT WHERE YOU WANT HIM THEN YOU LET HIM GO--

-- AND STILL THERE'S A HOLE THROUGH YOU BIGGER THAN MY FIST. I'M CONFUSED.

THE PUNK WOULD BE EASY TO KILL-- AND SPAWN IS TEMPTED.

BUT SOMETHING'S HAPPENING HERE-- SOMETHING THAT MIGHT THREATEN THE FILTHY STRETCH OF PAVEMENT THAT SPAWN CALLS HOME.

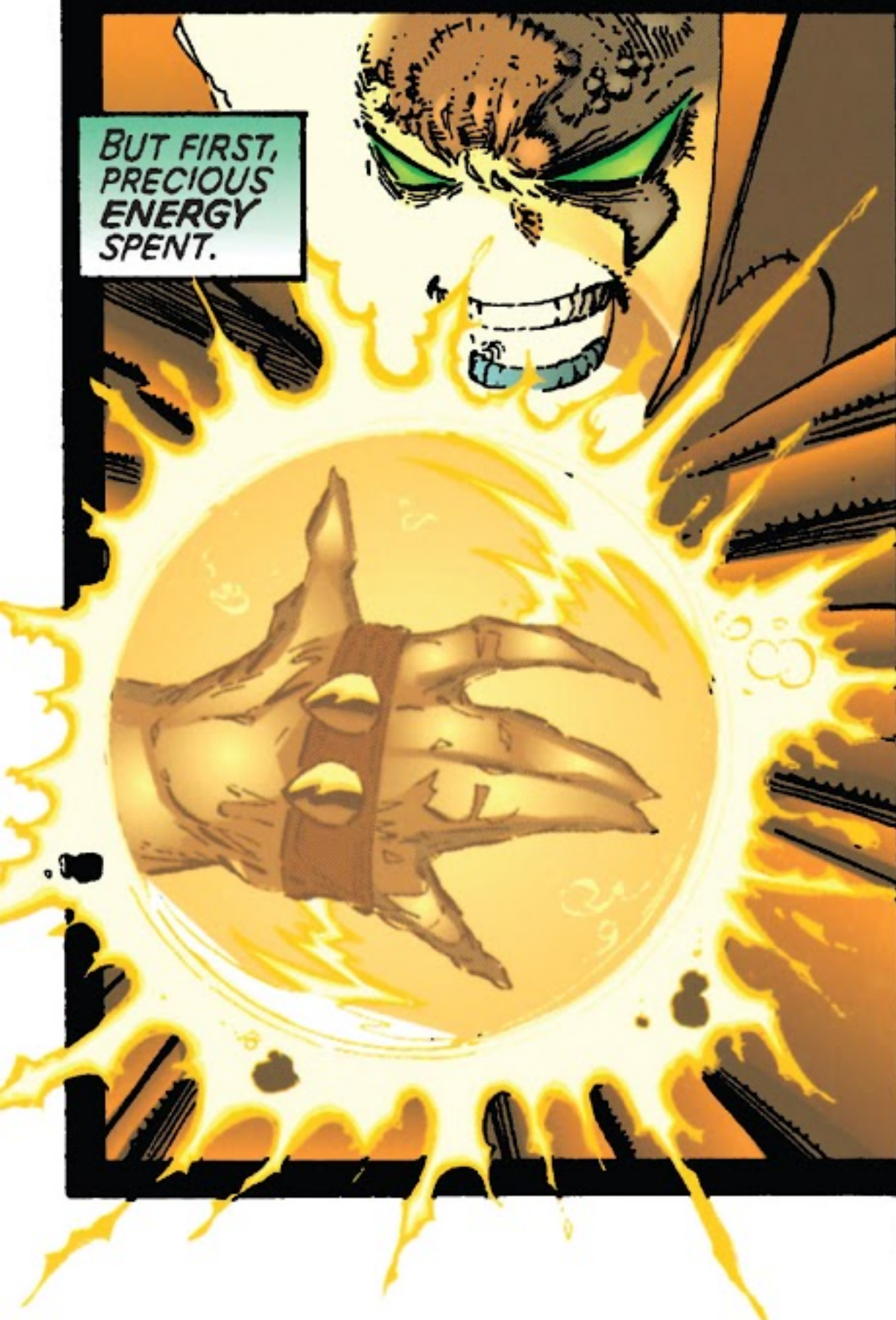
AND THERE'S THE GIRL. "SAVE ME," SHE SAID.

HE DIDN'T.

WHO ARE THESE PEOPLE? WHAT ARE THEY DOING HERE? WHERE'D THE PUNK GET THAT CANNON?

THE PUNK WILL BE EASY TO FOLLOW-- AND MAY LEAD SPAWN TO SOME ANSWERS.

THEN, PERHAPS, THE KILLING STARTS.



BUT FIRST, PRECIOUS ENERGY SPENT.



AND NOW THERE'S NO HOLE. COULD'VE PUT MY FIST RIGHT THROUGH IT A MINUTE AGO AND NOW THERE'S NO HOLE. YOU'RE SOME STRANGE KIND OF GUY, AL. TRULY UNIQUE.





YEAH,
YEAH, I *DID*
THAT *CREEP*
CHICK, ALL
RIGHT? BUT I
RUN *INTO*
SOMETHING
REALLY
WEIRD.

IT WAS A *GUY*
OR SOMETHING. IT
WAS HARD TO TELL
WHAT, WITH ALL THE
CAPE AND *CHAINS*
AND EVERYTHING--

--BUT IT
TOOK A
DIRECT HIT--
IT HAD A
HOLE RIGHT
THROUGH ITS
CHEST AND
IT GOT BACK
UP!

YOU'VE BEEN
DOING SOMETHING
YOU *SHOULDN'T*,
HAVEN'T YOU, *BOOMER*?
SOMETHING THAT GOES
IN YOUR *ARM*. OR UP
YOUR *NOSE*. OR DOWN
YOUR *THROAT*. SOME-
THING THAT MAKES
YOU VERY, VERY
STUPID.

THAT'S VERY
BAD, *BOOMER*.
YOU *KNOW* THE
RULES. YOU JOIN
THE *NERDS* AND
YOU STAY *CLEAN*
SO YOU DON'T
START *SEEING*
THINGS.

BYRON--
HELP ME
ADVISE
HIM.

"*CREEPS*"?

"*NERDS*"?

GANG NAMES.
STREET GANGS.

THE PLOT
THICKENS.

THEN ALL OF A
SUDDEN THERE'S
A GAG FROM THE
ONE THEY CALL
"*BOOMER*"--
THERE'S A *HISS*,
HYDRAULIC...



THIS IS

BYRON™

CYBORG
ENFORCER FOR
THE NERD GANG.
BIG AND MEAN
AND STUPID
AS THEY COME.

NEEDS
STAY CLEAN.
IT'S THE RULE.
NEEDS STAY
CLEAN.

VERY WELL
SPOKEN, BYRON.
THANK YOU.

WE
STAY CLEAN,
BOOMER. WE
DON'T DO DRUGS.
WE DON'T SELL
DRUGS. WE EAT
OUR JUNK FOOD
AND WE STEAL OUR
ELECTRONICS
EQUIPMENT
AND WE KILL
CREEPS.

GLAGG

I'M CLEAN,
NORTON!
I SWEAR!

WE DON'T
SWEAR EITHER,
BOOMER! WE DO
WHAT WE'RE
TOLD!

WHITE MIDDLE CLASS
COMPUTER GEEK
STREET GANGS.

AT LEAST IT'S
NOT A TALKING
AARDVARK...



BRING HIM DOWN HERE SO THAT I CAN YELL AT HIM SOME MORE, BYRON.

THANK YOU, BYRON.

WHAT WE'RE TOLD. WE ARE NERDS.

GLUKK

I DONE WHAT YOU TOLD ME TO, NORTON! I DID THE CREEP CHICK. I'M JUST TELLING YOU THERE'S A PROBLEM WITH THAT ALLEY WE'RE SUPPOSED TO TAKE.

MAYBE WE SHOULD STAY AWAY FROM IT.

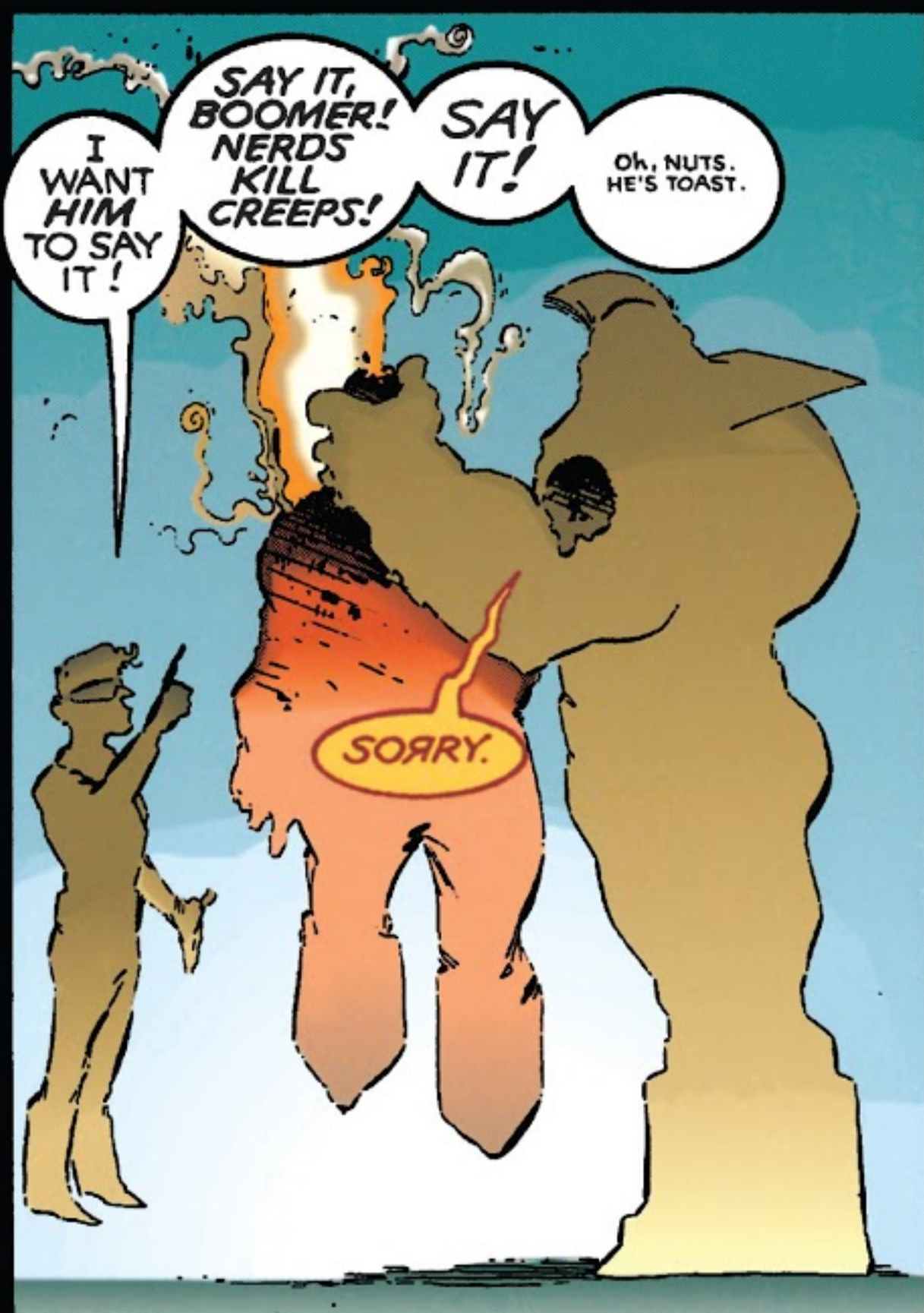
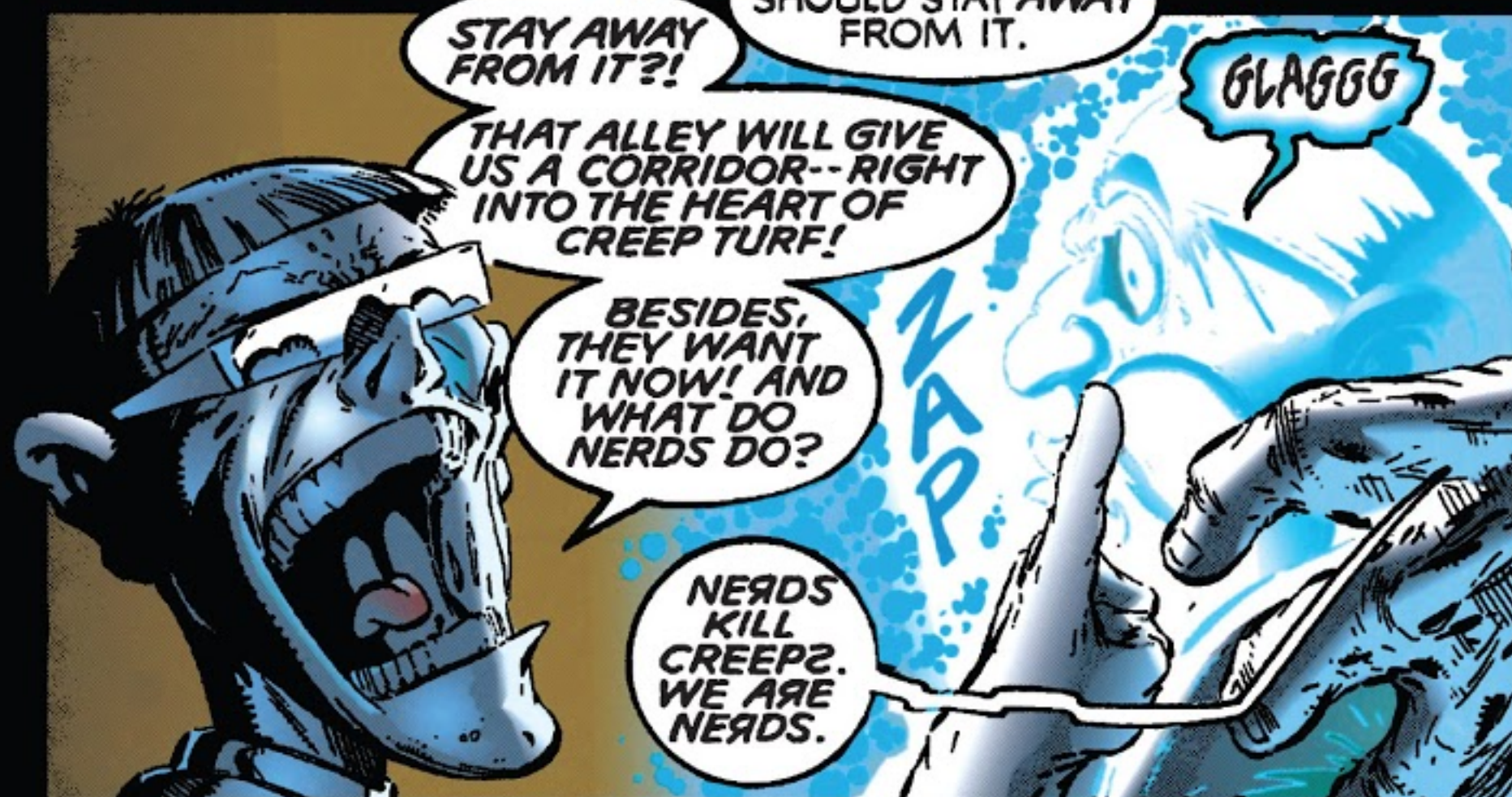
STAY AWAY FROM IT?!

THAT ALLEY WILL GIVE US A CORRIDOR-- RIGHT INTO THE HEART OF CREEP TURF!

BESIDES, THEY WANT IT NOW! AND WHAT DO NERDS DO?

NERDS KILL CREEPS. WE ARE NERDS.

GLAGGG



I WANT HIM TO SAY IT!

SAY IT, BOOMER! NERDS KILL CREEPS!

SAY IT!

Oh, NUTS. HE'S TOAST.

SORRY.

A TURF WAR-- AND SPAWN'S HOME IS RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF IT.

POWER DEPLETED, FIXING HIS CHEST. TOO MANY GUNS DOWN THERE TO GO AFTER THEM RIGHT NOW, ANYWAY.

IT'S THE WRONG TIME FOR AN ATTACK. HE LEARNED TO TELL THE DIFFERENCE-- BACK IN THE WARS.

THAT'S RIGHT. THINK LIKE A SOLDIER.

THERE'S AN IMPORTANT RULE TO WAR. IF ALL YOU'RE DOING IS DEFENSE, YOU'RE SCREWED.

YOU HAVE TO CREATE THE SITUATION.

BUT FIRST OF ALL, YOU WATCH OUT FOR YOUR BUDDIES...





MEANWHILE.

BACK AT THE ALLEY.

BACK HOME.

POOR DEAR. POOR DEAR.

YEAH, BUT WE GOT US A PROBLEM, BOOTS! WE CAN'T LEAVE A DEAD BODY LYING AROUND HERE--

--AND WE CAN'T STICK AROUND IF WE DO! THE COPS'LL BE ALL OVER US!

MAYBE THERE'S ROOM AT THE MISSION...



GET AWAY FROM HER, YOU BUMS!



THIS IS

JAMES™

CYBORG ENFORCER FOR THE CREEP GANG. BIG AND MEAN, BUT RATHER EMOTIONAL.

BUFFY! OH, SWEET BUFFY...

DON'T MIND US.

WE WERE JUST LEAVING...

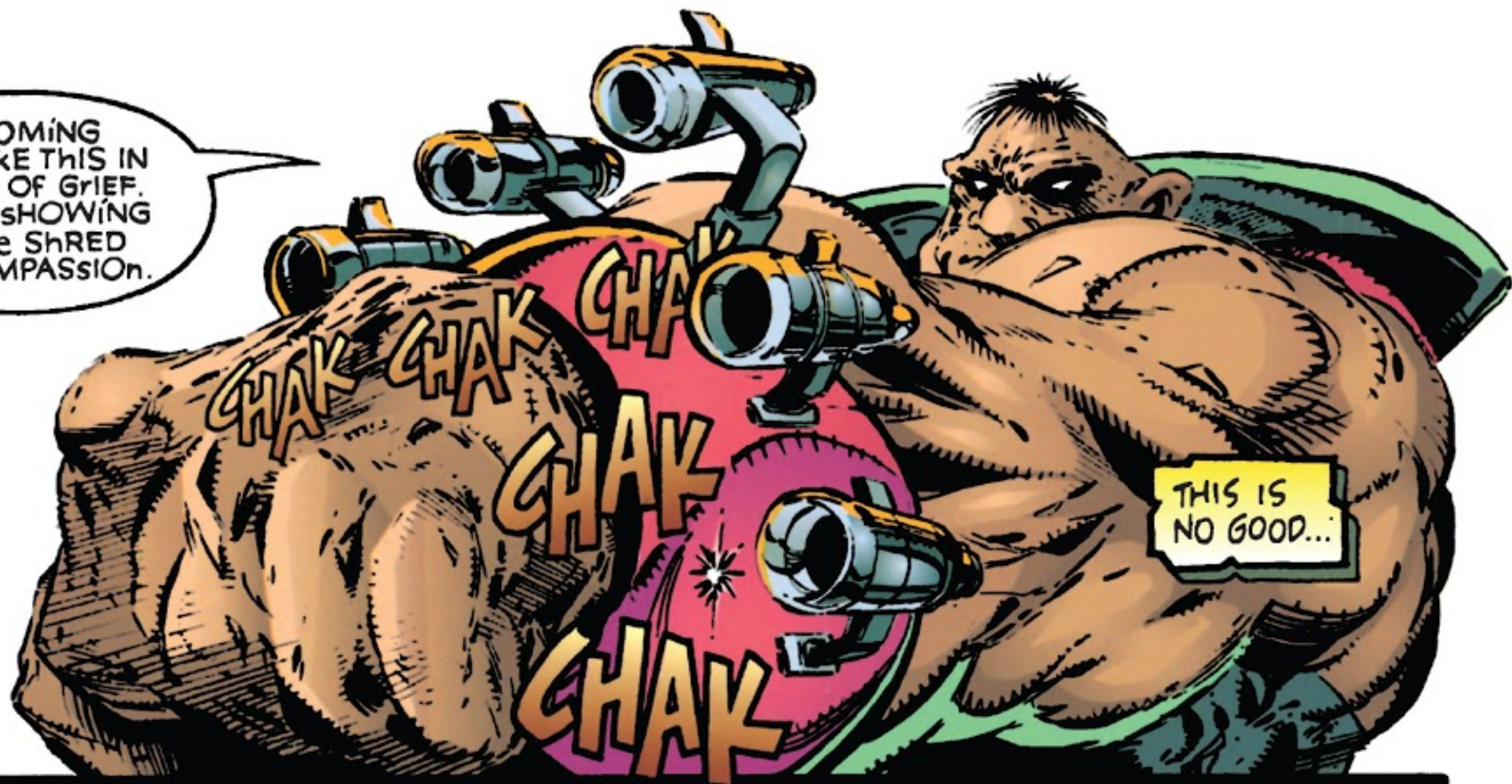


THE NERDS WILL PAY FOR THIS. HEADS WILL ROLL. GUTS WILL FLY.

I'm GONNA GO ON A RAMPAGE, AS SOON AS I GET PERMISSION.



YOU COMING
AT ME LIKE THIS IN
MY HOUR OF GRIEF.
YOU NOT SHOWING
ME ONE SHRED
OF COMPASSION.



THIS IS
NO GOOD...



...EVEN IF I BEAT THIS
GUY-- THERE'LL BE MORE--
FROM BOTH SIDES.

I'VE GOT TO
CREATE THE
SITUATION.



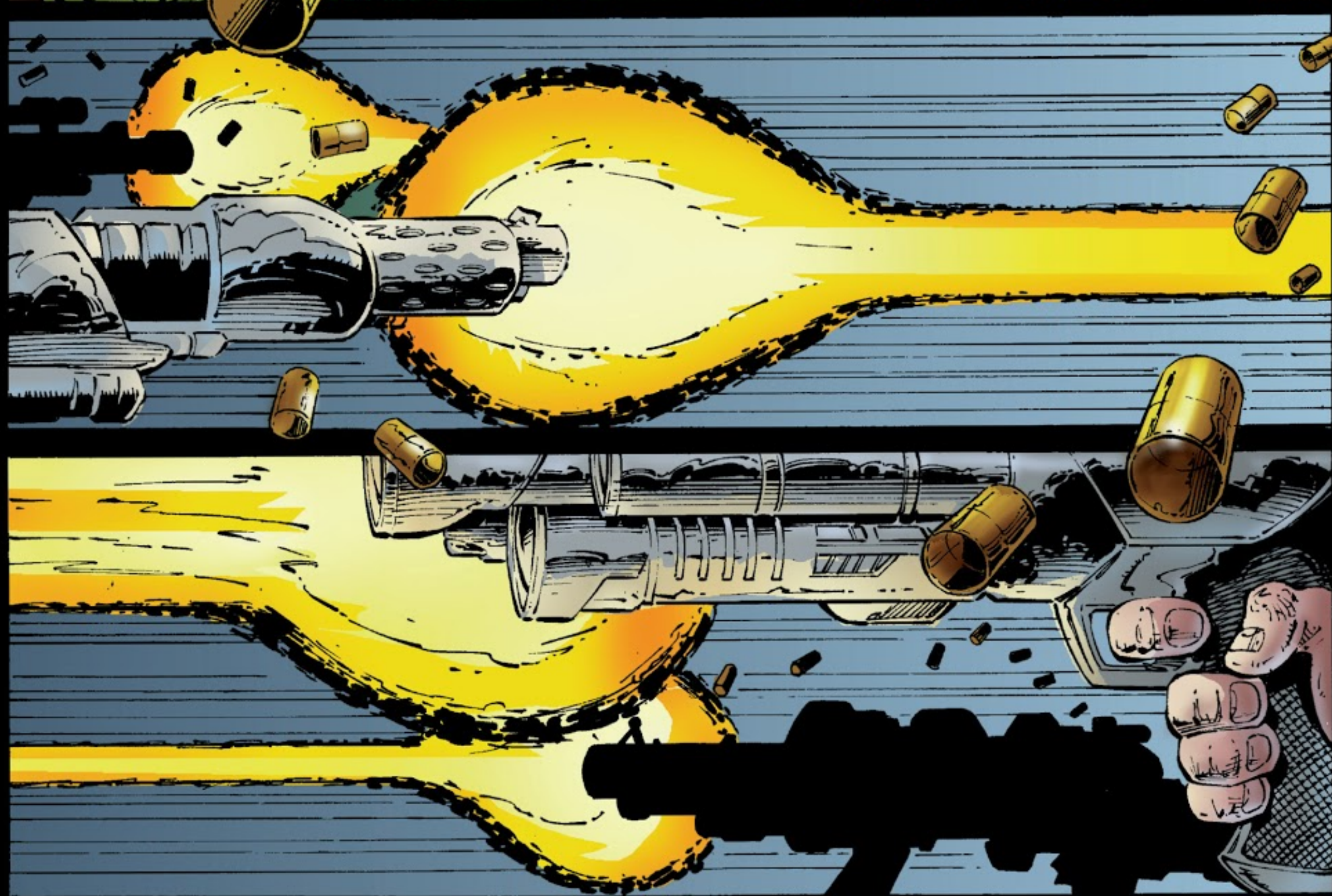
OF
COURSE.

SPAWN
SUMMONS
HIS HELL-
BORN
POWER...

GREEPS!

IT'S SO
SIMPLE.





HAH!

CREEPS
KILL NERDS!
NERDS KILL
CREEPS!
ALL CREEPS DIE!
ALL NERDS DIE!

ONLY

BYRON™
STILL
LIVES!

BYRON™
RULES
THE ALLEY!
BYRON™
OWNS
THE ALLEY!

BYRON...





BUT IT'S LIKE
THE ESCAPE ARTIST
HOUDINI SAID
ABOUT A BANK
VAULT HE LOCKED
HIMSELF INTO.

--NOT TO KEEP
PEOPLE IN.

GAGG!

GLURK

IT'S NOT FUN, AND
IT'S NOT PRETTY--

IT'S BUILT
TO KEEP
PEOPLE OUT--

--BUT IT
WORKS.



I'M NOT ASKING
THIS TIME, AL. I'M NOT
BUGGING YOU WITH A BUNCH
OF STUPID QUESTIONS ABOUT
STUFF THAT DON'T CONCERN ME.
SOMETIMES A GUY'S JUST GOT
TO REALIZE THERE'S THINGS
THAT ARE SIMPLY BEYOND A
GUY'S UNDERSTANDING. SO
I'M NOT ASKING ABOUT
HOW IT IS YOU POPPED
INTO THAT GUY'S CHEST
AND CAME BACK OUT.

BUT WHAT
I AM ASKING
IS WHAT ABOUT
US? WHAT
ABOUT THE
ALLEY?

WE LET
THE **COPS**
CLEAN IT UP.
THEN, YOU KNOW,
WE MOVE
BACK IN--

-- AND
LIFE
GOES
ON.

NEXT-

Who killed
SPAWN?





image

12
JUL

DIGITAL
EDITION

SPAWN



McFARLANE
04



SPAWN.

MORE APPROPRIATELY, HELLSPAWN. THE OFFICERS-IN-TRAINING OF THE MALEBOLGIA, SENT TO THE LIVING WORLD TO HONE THEIR POTENT, YET LIMITED, SUPPLY OF POWER. THEY MUST FIRST PROVE WORTHY OF THEIR RARE SELECTION AS A WARRIOR FROM THE REALMS BEYOND.

THE LATEST RECRUIT, AND THE FIRST THIS CENTURY, IS LT. COLONEL AL SIMMONS. MILLIONS OF SOULS, BOTH GOOD AND EVIL, WERE BYPASSED BEFORE SIMMONS WAS APPOINTED. HE HAD THE GIFT, THE RIGHT WIRING. THE WELL-TOOLED MACHINERY. DURING HIS FIRST EXISTENCE ON EARTH, HE HAD SHOWN A WILLINGNESS TO FOLLOW ORDERS. TO KILL. TO MURDER. TO SLAUGHTER. ALL IN THE NAME OF DUTY. HE DIDN'T BELIEVE IN THE GREAT BEYOND, BUT HIS ATHEISTIC LEANINGS ONLY MADE HELL'S SELECTION OF HIM EVEN MORE SATISFYING.

YET THE UNBELIEVER CANNOT BE CHOSEN AGAINST HIS WILL. HE OR SHE MUST OPEN THE DOOR TO EVIL WILLINGLY AND WITHOUT HESITATION. THE SURREAL TRAUMA OF DEATH EXPERIENCED BY EACH SOUL LEAVES MANY OPEN TO EXPLOITATION. THE EVIL ONE QUICKLY FOUND THE CHINK IN SIMMONS' EMOTIONAL ARMOR:

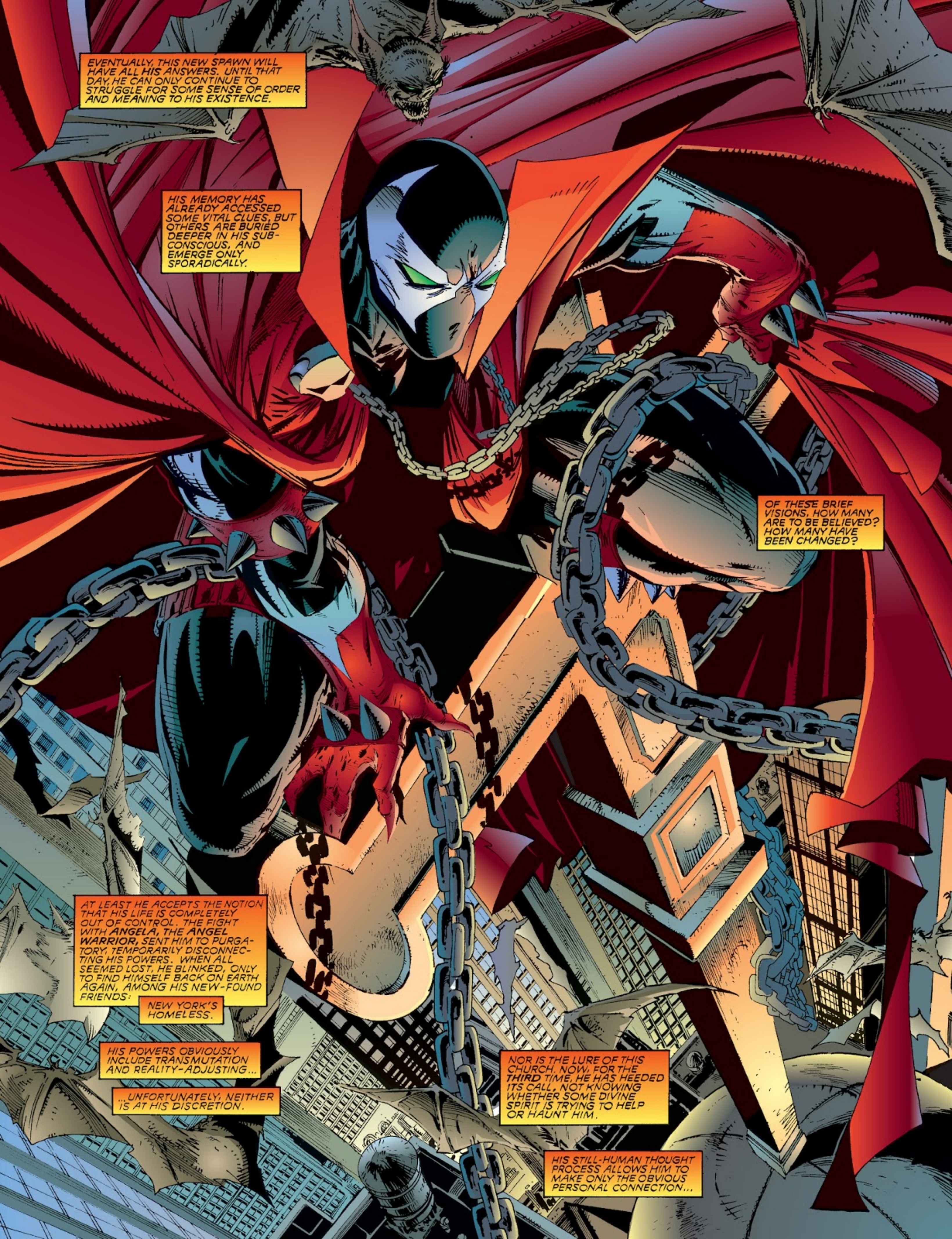
LOVE.

NOT FOR DUTY OR COUNTRY, BUT FOR SOMEONE. THIS WEAKNESS HAS BEEN THE GREATEST OF ALL AIDS TO ENLISTMENT FOR THE MALEBOLGIA'S ARMY. EASILY-MANIPULATED NEWLY-ARRIVED SOULS WILL BARTER NEARLY ANYTHING FOR LOVE. THEY WILL PROMISE, AND EVIL WILL ACCEPT. THUS, THEIR FATE IS SEALED. THE PACT WILL BE IN EFFECT FOR ETERNITY.

THIS IRONY-- LOVE AS EVIL'S TRUMP CARD-- IS NOT HIDDEN FROM GOD. SOME DAY, THESE TWO POWERS WILL CLASH OVER THIS COSMIC "HOLY GRAIL"-- ARMAGEDDON WILL BE FOUGHT FOR THE REASON HUMANS EXIST IN THE FIRST PLACE...

LOVE.

AL SIMMONS
TRADED HIS
SOUL FOR IT.

A dramatic comic book illustration featuring Spawn and his allies. Spawn, with his iconic white mask and red cape, is at the center, looking down with a determined expression. He is surrounded by his allies: a winged figure at the top, a red-skinned warrior on the right, and a red-skinned figure at the bottom. They are all bound by thick, metallic chains that hang from above. The background is a detailed, high-angle view of a city, likely New York City, with various buildings and streets visible. The color palette is dominated by reds, blues, and greys, creating a somber and intense atmosphere.

EVENTUALLY, THIS NEW SPAWN WILL HAVE ALL HIS ANSWERS. UNTIL THAT DAY, HE CAN ONLY CONTINUE TO STRUGGLE FOR SOME SENSE OF ORDER AND MEANING TO HIS EXISTENCE.

HIS MEMORY HAS ALREADY ACCESSED SOME VITAL CLUES, BUT OTHERS ARE BURIED DEEPER IN HIS SUB-CONSCIOUS, AND EMERGE ONLY SPORADICALLY.

OF THESE BRIEF VISIONS, HOW MANY ARE TO BE BELIEVED? HOW MANY HAVE BEEN CHANGED?

AT LEAST HE ACCEPTS THE NOTION THAT HIS LIFE IS COMPLETELY OUT OF CONTROL. THE FIGHT WITH ANGELA, THE ANGEL WARRIOR, SENT HIM TO PURGATORY, TEMPORARILY DISCONNECTING HIS POWERS. WHEN ALL SEEMED LOST, HE BLINKED, ONLY TO FIND HIMSELF BACK ON EARTH AGAIN, AMONG HIS NEW-FOUND FRIENDS:

NEW YORK'S HOMELESS.

HIS POWERS OBVIOUSLY INCLUDE TRANSMUTATION AND REALITY-ADJUSTING...

...UNFORTUNATELY, NEITHER IS AT HIS DISCRETION.

NOR IS THE LURE OF THIS CHURCH. NOW, FOR THE THIRD TIME, HE HAS HEEDED ITS CALL, NOT KNOWING WHETHER SOME DIVINE SPIRIT IS TRYING TO HELP OR HAUNT HIM.

HIS STILL-HUMAN THOUGHT PROCESS ALLOWS HIM TO MAKE ONLY THE OBVIOUS PERSONAL CONNECTION...

MY WEDDING.

IT WAS THE ONLY TIME I ENTERED A CHURCH. BUT WHAT'S THAT GOT TO DO WITH ANYTHING? MAYBE SOMETHING... MAYBE.

BESIDES, RECALLING SOME HAPPINESS MAY BE THE ONLY WAY I STAY SANE.

DO YOU, WANDA CATHERINE BLAKE, TAKE THIS MAN...



THE CEREMONY WAS ENJOYABLE, I HEARD. MY ATTENTION WAS FOCUSED SOLELY ON WANDA. FROM THE MOMENT SHE WALKED DOWN THE AISLE UNTIL WE LEFT THE CHURCH AS HUSBAND AND WIFE, I ALMOST FORGOT HOW TO SAY "I DO." I WAS SO MESMERIZED BY HER. NOT NERVOUS. I WAS NEVER NERVOUS... JUST TOTALLY CAPTIVATED BY HER BEAUTY, AND WHAT THE DAY MEANT FOR US.

OUR LIVES. THE FUTURE. EVERYTHING SEEMED SO PERFECT THAT DAY.

ESPECIALLY HER.



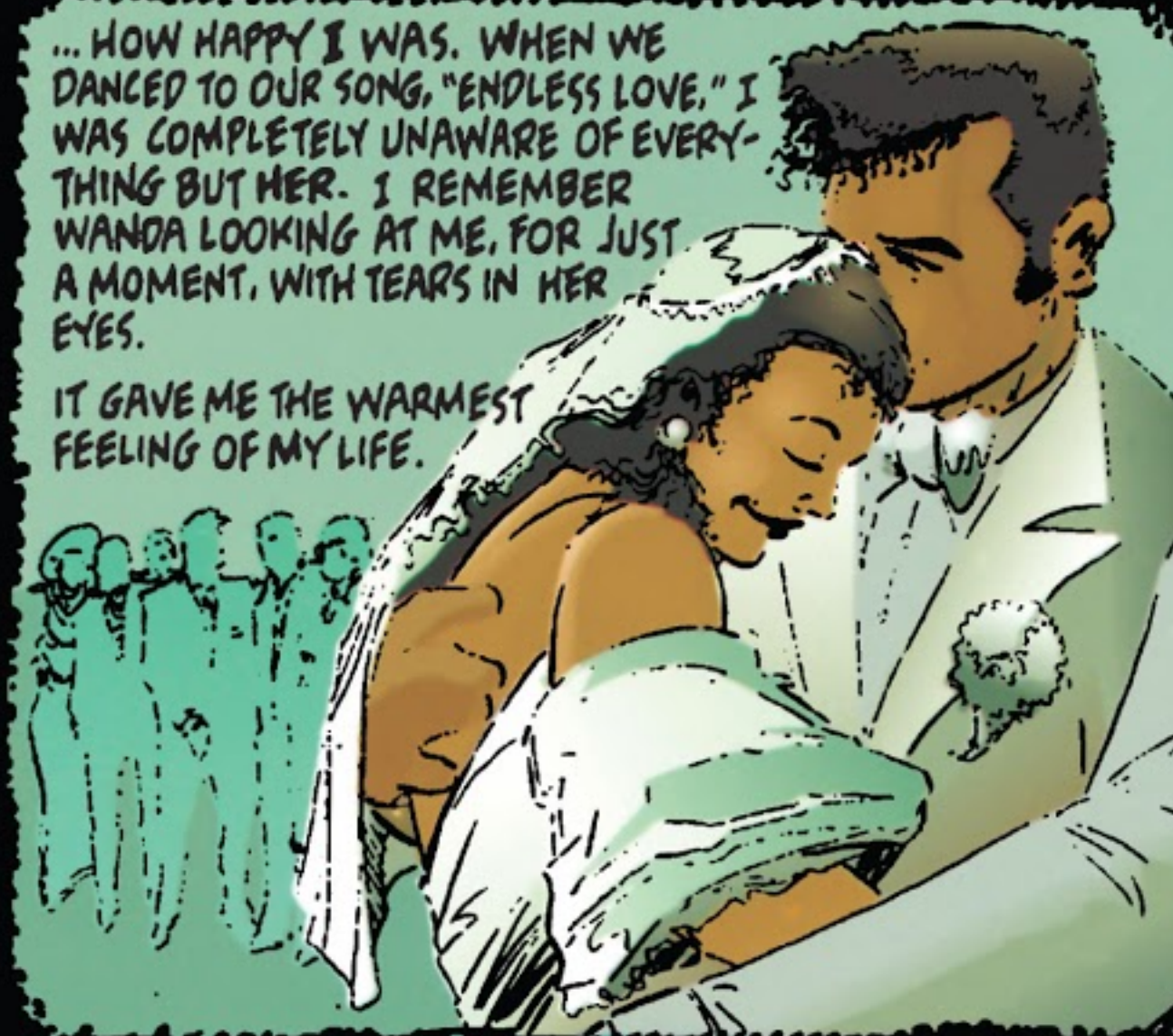
I'LL NEVER FORGET HOW INCREDIBLE SHE LOOKED.

HOW HAPPY SHE WAS.



... HOW HAPPY I WAS. WHEN WE DANCED TO OUR SONG, "ENDLESS LOVE," I WAS COMPLETELY UNAWARE OF EVERYTHING BUT HER. I REMEMBER WANDA LOOKING AT ME, FOR JUST A MOMENT, WITH TEARS IN HER EYES.

IT GAVE ME THE WARMEST FEELING OF MY LIFE.



AND WHO COULD FORGET LITTLE GRANDMA BLAKE. HER BLINDNESS NEVER SLOWED THAT WOMAN DOWN FOR A SECOND. FIESTY, JUST LIKE HER GRAND-DAUGHTER.



PLEASE, AL. I DON'T MEAN TO PRY, BUT WHY DON'T YOU MAKE WANDA TAKE YOUR LAST NAME. SHE WON'T LISTEN TO ME. CURSE HER STUBBORNNESS.

DOESN'T SHE LOVE YOU? ISN'T SHE PROUD OF YOUR NAME? WHAT ABOUT YOUR MOM AND DAD...?

THEY MUST BE HURT.



IT MUST HAVE BEEN THE FIFTIETH TIME WE'D HAD THIS DISCUSSION. I TOLD HER THE SAME THING I DID THE OTHER FORTY-NINE TIMES. "I MET A WANDA BLAKE. I FELL IN LOVE WITH A WANDA BLAKE. I'VE BEEN DATING A WANDA BLAKE AND NOW I WAS MARRIED TO A WANDA BLAKE. WANDA SIMMONS SOUNDS LIKE MY SISTER."

BUT WHAT ABOUT THE CHILDREN? WHAT ARE THEY GONNA BE? SIMMONS? BLAKE? ONE OF THEM SILLY HYPHENATED NAMES?

PLEASE, THINK ABOUT THE CHILDREN.



CHILDREN. FUNNY HOW THAT POINT BECAME MOOT.

I WASN'T ABLE TO GIVE WANDA THE KIDS SHE WANTED SO DESPERATELY.



DON'T WORRY. WE'VE FIGURED IT ALL OUT. INSTEAD OF "BLAKE-SIMMONS," WE'RE GOING TO SHORTEN IT TO B.S.

BIG B.S.! AND LITTLE B.S.!

WE'RE PLANNING ON HAVING ONLY TWO.

I DON'T THINK SHE WAS AMUSED. THE DOCTORS SAID IT WASN'T ME WHO WAS STERILE. NOW I KNOW THEY WERE WRONG. TERRY-- DAMN HIM-- HE GAVE HER A CHILD.



MY BEST MAN. MY BEST FRIEND! HOW COULD HE MARRY HER?!

HOW COULD HE DO THAT TO ME?! HIM AND WANDA! AT NIGHT! IN THEIR BEDROOM!! I CAN'T STOP THINKING ABOUT IT. I FEEL LIKE I'M BEING CHEATED ON.

DRIVING MYSELF CRAZY. NEED TO GET A GRIP.



I KNOW. IT'S NOT HIS FAULT. IT'S NO ONE'S FAULT. BUT THAT DOESN'T MAKE IT FEEL ANY BETTER.

I NEED HELP. I THINK I KNOW WHERE TO GET SOME.

WASHINGTON, D.C.
THE OFFICE OF
JASON WYNN,
C.I.A.

OUR INVESTIGATION SHOWED THAT ONLY A **HANDFUL** OF PERSONNEL EVEN HAD ACCESS TO THOSE FILES, SIR.

WHO'S THE TOP SUSPECT AT THE MOMENT?

YOU'RE NOT GOING TO LIKE THIS, SIR.

FITZGERALD.
TERRY FITZGERALD.

COMBINED WITH THE KNOWLEDGE OF OUR ARMORY HARDWARE PLACEMENT, WE'VE NARROWED OUR LIST DOWN TO THREE POSSIBILITIES.

DAMN.

I HAD SUCH HIGH HOPES FOR THE YOUNG MAN. WHAT A DISAPPOINTMENT.

CONTINUE.

OUR DATA SHOWS THAT HE IS HEAVILY LINKED WITH ALL FACETS OF HIGH-PRIORITY GOVERNMENTAL PROJECTS, AS WELL AS CONSTANT INTERACTION WITH C.I.A. AND PRESIDENTIAL FILES. TO THIS POINT HE HAS KEPT A CLEAN RECORD AND HAS BEEN COMPLETELY OPEN TO ANY SECURITY CHECKS.

WHAT'S HIS MOTIVE?

REVENGE.

AS I'M SURE YOU'RE AWARE, FITZGERALD WAS BEST FRIENDS WITH **LT. COLONEL AL SIMMONS**, ONE OF YOUR **FORMER** AGENTS. IT'S OUR BELIEF THAT HE IS TRYING TO GATHER INFORMATION THAT MIGHT BE USEFUL IN A **BLACKMAIL** SITUATION.

YOU REMEMBER SIMMONS, DON'T YOU, SIR?



Ah, YES.

SIMMONS.

NOW THERE
WAS A
MAJOR
DISAPPOINT-
MENT.



SHAME
ABOUT HIS
DEATH.

THAT'S
THE POINT,
SIR.

AT FIRST,
FITZGERALD, ALONG
WITH SIMMONS' WIDOW, BLAMED
THE AGENCY FOR HIS DEATH. HE
QUICKLY CAME TO REALIZE HIS
MISTAKE AND MADE FORMAL
APOLOGIES TO THE APPRO-
PRIATE OFFICES. HE HAS
SINCE **MARRIED** SIMMONS'
WIDOW, WANDA BLAKE.

WITH HER PARANOIA
A CONSTANT THORN IN
HIS SIDE, IT WOULD BE
QUITE REASONABLE TO
ASSUME THE TWO OF
THEM HAVE DECIDED
TO FOCUS THEIR
ANGUISH IN A
HOSTILE FASHION.

I SEE.

I WANT YOU
TO CONTACT A COUPLE
OF AGENTS IN NEW YORK.
HAVE THEM GET ACROSS
TO HIM A SENSE OF OUR
SUSPICIONS. THEN
FOLLOW HIS
EVERY MOVE.

IT'S ALWAYS AMUSING TO SEE
WHICH DIRECTION A SCUTTLING
WEASEL WILL RUN.



THERE SHE IS, SITTING ON THE FRONT PORCH, JUST LIKE SHE ALWAYS DID. NICE TO SEE SOME THINGS HAVEN'T CHANGED.

HELLO?

WHO'S THERE?

SUCH A SIMPLE QUESTION.



GRANNIE.

GRANNIE BLAKE. IT'S ME... IT'S...

God have mercy. Al?!

IS IT REALLY YOU?!

PLEASE DON'T GET UP, GRANNIE.



MY DEAR... AL... HOW CAN THIS BE?! I-I'M GETTING SCARED.

PLEASE DON'T BE.

I WON'T BE LONG. I JUST CAME TO TELL YOU THAT YOU WERE RIGHT. THERE IS AN AFTERLIFE. I'M SORRY I DIDN'T BELIEVE YOU.

I-I'M SORRY I DIDN'T HEED YOUR WARNINGS.

I'VE BEEN SENT TO TELL YOU THAT THERE'S A PLACE IN HEAVEN WAITING FOR YOU WHEN YOUR DAY COMES. THE HEAVENS WILL TRUMPET YOUR ARRIVAL.



BLESS YOU, CHILD.

I LOOK FORWARD TO JOINING YOU AND MY OTHER FRIENDS SOMEDAY.

GRANNIE-- I... I WON'T BE THERE WITH YOU.

HEAVEN IS FOR THE GREAT SPIRITS OF THE WORLD. THOSE WHO CARE. THOSE WHO OVERCOME GREAT HARDSHIPS. I CREATED STRIFE, NOT LOVE. WHEN OTHERS HELD OUT THEIR HANDS TO ME, I WALKED AWAY. GOD WELCOMES BELIEVERS, NOT DOUBTERS... PEOPLE WHOSE SPIRITS ARE FILLED WITH GOODNESS AND COMPASSION.

PEOPLE LIKE YOU.

NOW YOU LISTEN HERE, BOY. YOU WAS A **HERO**. YOU UNDERSTAND? EVERYONE ALWAYS TOLD ME SO. DON'T KNOW **WHY** YOU'RE SO CONFUSED, BUT GOD DIDN'T SEND YOU DOWN HERE JUST TO TELL ME I'M GOING TO HEAVEN.

HE MUST'A SENT YOU DOWN SO'S HE COULD PROVE TO YOU THAT YOU'RE A **REAL ANGEL**.

AIN'T **NO** WAY **SATAN** GONNA SEND ONE OF HIS JUST TO TELL FOLKS THEY'RE GOING TO HEAVEN. DON'T MAKE NO SENSE.

YOU HEAR ME?!

I LOVE YOU, AL. I MISS YOU SO MUCH. YOU MADE ME LAUGH LIKE NO ONE ELSE COULD. I MISS THAT. I MISS YOU.

AND **WANDA**. YOU'D BE SO PROUD OF HER. CARRYING ON WITH LIFE. GOT HERSELF A BEAUTIFUL GIRL. AND A **HUSBAND**.

DIDN'T TAKE **HIS** LAST NAME, EITHER.

THOUGH I SUPPOSE YOU KNOW **ALL** THIS, SITTING UP THERE WATCHING DOWN ON US ALL DAY.

GRANNIE

I HAVE TO ASK YOU SOMETHING. DOES **WANDA** STILL THINK OF ME?

HEAVEN'S SAKE, CHILD!!

THAT WOMAN'S GOT MORE LOVE FOR YOU TODAY THAN SHE EVER HAD. SHE MISSES YOU MORE THAN ANY OF US.

YOU GAVE HER HAPPINESS, AL. AND LOVE. NO ONE CAN EVER TAKE THAT AWAY. SHE STILL VISITS ME EVERY TUESDAY. WHEN WE TALK ABOUT YOU, I CAN STILL HEAR THE LOVE IN HER VOICE.

I KNOW YOU'RE PAINED. BUT SOMEDAY, YOU AND **WANDA** WILL BE REUNITED FOREVER. WE ALL WILL.

I HOPE YOU'RE RIGHT. THANK YOU. THANK YOU SO MUCH, GRANNIE.

I HAVE TO GO NOW.

GOD BLESS YOU.



NEW YORK CITY OFFICIALS CONFIRMED THEIR INTENT TO BEEF UP POLICE PRESENCE IN MANHATTAN'S LOWER WEST IN RESPONSE TO THE SUDDEN RASH OF **VIOLENCE** IN THAT CITY'S BACK STREETS. BESIDES EARLIER REPORTS OF NONSANCTIONED **YOUNGBLOOD** ACTIVITY, THERE REMAINS THE QUESTION OF WHY SO MANY OF THE VICTIMS ARE SUSPECTED OF CONNECTIONS TO THE **MAFIA**.

WITH THIS NEW DEVELOPMENT, IT COMES AS NO SURPRISE TO ORGANIZED CRIME WATCHERS THAT SICILIAN BODYGUARD **OVERT-KILL** WAS REPORTEDLY SEEN IN NEW YORK LAST WEEK. HOWEVER, OUR REPORTERS HAVE HAD NO LUCK IN DETERMINING HIS WHEREABOUTS.

ACCORDING TO SOURCES CLOSE TO THE MAYOR'S OFFICE, MANHATTAN IS FACING THE GRIM POSSIBILITY OF A **WAR**, SEEMINGLY BETWEEN THOSE MAFIA GANGS AND THE MOBS OF DISENFRANCHISED YOUTH WHO PATTERN THEMSELVES AFTER THE GOVERNMENT'S **YOUNGBLOOD** PROGRAM.



SPINELESS WHELPS!!

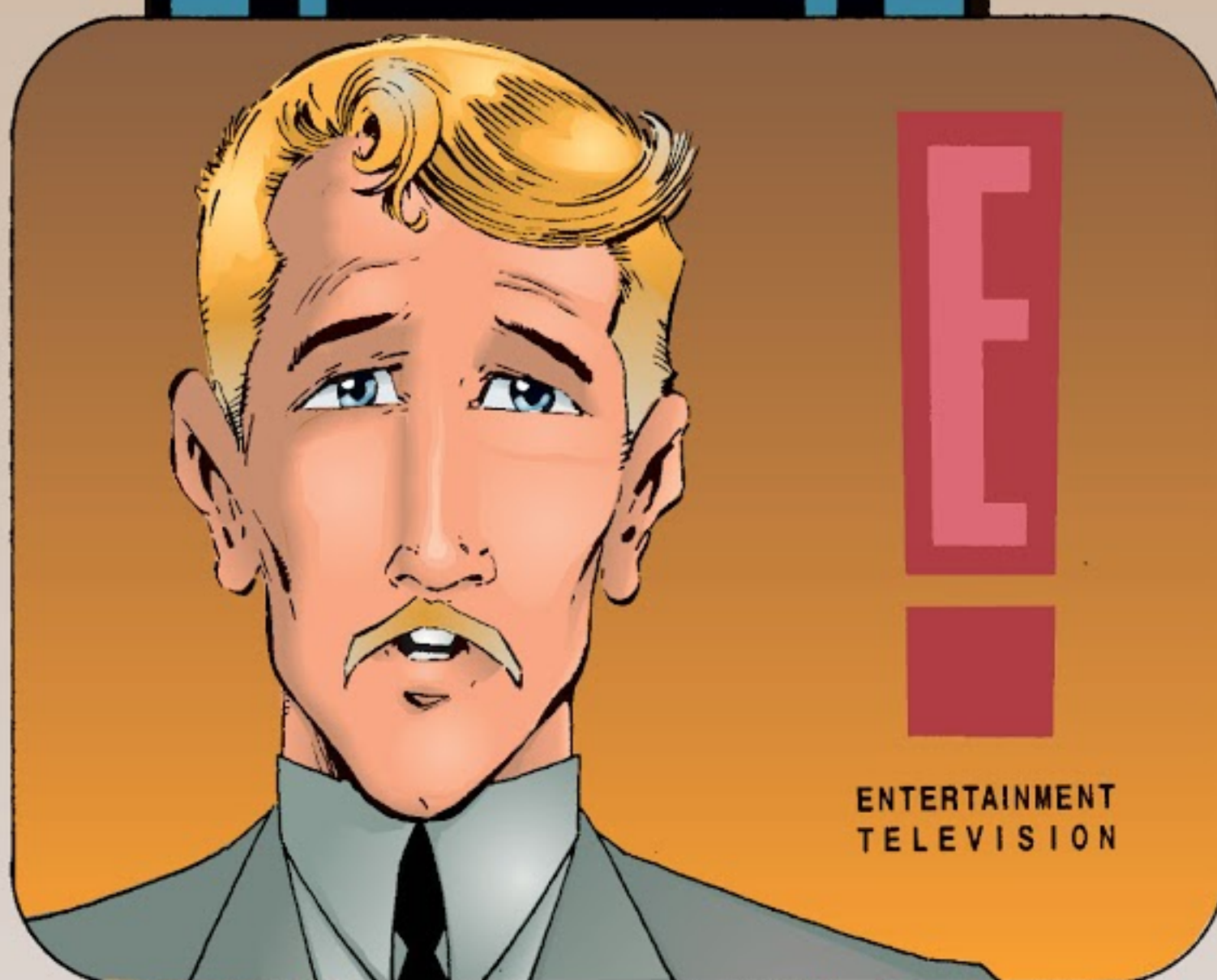
THAT'S RIGHT, YOU PUNKS, YOU HEARD ME! IN MY DAY, WE DIDN'T RESORT TO SUCH **COWARDLY** STUNTS AS SHOOTING ONE ANOTHER! MIND YOU, I DON'T GIVE A **HOOT** IF YOU WANT TO LITTER THE ALLEYS WITH EACH OTHERS' **INTESTINES!**

FACT IS, THAT'D MAKE ME RATHER **GIDDY**. WHAT GETS MY GOAT, THOUGH, IS THAT YOU HAVE TO SHOOT AT **ALL**. YOU WANT TO EMULATE THE GOVERNMENT WHIZ KIDS, FINE! I THINK THAT'S **MORONIC**, BUT WHAT CAN I EXPECT FROM A BUNCH OF TEENAGE **TECHNO-NERDS?!**

CERTAINLY **NOT** INTELLIGENCE.

WHEN I BELONGED TO GANGS, WE SETTLED THINGS WITH OUR **FISTS!** YOU COULD SEE THE ENEMY'S EYES. NOW **YOU** USE **YOUNGBLOOD**-TYPE MILITARY **HARDWARE** THAT CAN LEVEL A **CITY BLOCK** IN ONE SHOT.

OH YEAH, WHAT A BUNCHA **FRIGGIN'** HEROES!



IN A MAJOR COUP FOR **PARAMOUNT**, STUDIO EXECUTIVES HAVE PURCHASED THE FILM RIGHTS TO MARK CURTIS' BEST-SELLER, "**COURAGEOUS AMBITIONS: THE AL SIMMONS STORY**." THIS UNOFFICIAL BIOGRAPHY DELVES INTO THE POLITICAL ARENA TO SHOW US JUST HOW DEMANDING IT CAN BE, WORKING AS ONE OF THE PRESIDENT'S **ERRAND BOYS**.

FOLLOWING THE HUGE SUCCESS OF CLINT EASTWOOD'S NEW FILM "**IN THE LINE OF FIRE**," AS WELL AS PRIOR FASCINATION WITH COLONEL OLIVER NORTH AND GENERAL "STORMIN'" NORMAN SCHWARTZKOPF, IT LOOKS AS IF HOLLYWOOD IS DETERMINED TO RUN THIS NEW GENRE INTO THE GROUND.

THIS JUST IN...

WE'VE RECEIVED WORD THAT THE AGENCY HANDLING **YOUNGBLOODS'** VERY OWN **BEDROCK** HAS RUN INTO SOME LEGAL SNAGS WITH ANIMATORS **HANNA-BARBARA** OVER NAME-USE RIGHTS.

NEW YORK CITY.
THE N.Y.P.D.'S
TWELFTH PRECINCT.

JUST BECAUSE THEY FIND A
DEAD GUY STRUNG UP IN
OUR OFFICE WITH POPSICLE
STICKS **RAMMED** THROUGH
HIS BELLY...

...WE'RE
PUT ON
INTERNAL
PROBA-
TION.

ONLY
UNTIL THE
BOARD'S
INQUIRY
GIVES ITS
RESULT.

SCREW
THE
BOARD.

I CAN'T
BELIEVE
IT!!

WHAT
A LOAD OF
CRAP!

AND **SCREW** CHIEF
BANKS!

THAT SONOVABITCH
HAS BEEN RIDING ME
EVERY DAY. WHAT'S
THE FRIGGIN' IDIOT
THINK WE DID?!--
CARRY KINCAID'S
BLOODY BODY UP THE
SIDE OF THE
BUILDING?!

LISTEN,
TWITCH, WE
BOTH KNOW
THAT KINCAID
DESERVED
TO DIE.

HELL--
EVERYONE
THOUGHT
SO!

BUT THE
MERE **FACT**
THAT BANKS
THINKS WE HAD
ANYTHING AT **ALL**
TO DO WITH THOSE
POPSICLE STICKS
POKING OUT OF
HIM JUST
INFURIATES
ME TO NO
END.

YES,
SIR. HE
DOES.

DON'T
FORGET
THE
ICE CREAM
SCOOP.



uh?

JEEZ, TWITCH! HOW CAN YOU JOKE AT A TIME LIKE THIS? YOUR ASS IS IN THE FIRE, TOO!

I REALIZE THAT, SIR.

BUT I TRY TO LOOK AT THE BRIGHT SIDE. SUCH AS-- THERE CAN BE NO POSSIBLE WAY THEY CAN FIND EITHER OF US EVEN REMOTELY RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT HAPPENED TO BILLY KINCAID.*

PLUS, THE EVIDENCE WE FOUND IN THE HOUSE HE RENTED PROVES THAT THE COURTS MADE A MISTAKE LETTING HIM GO IN THE FIRST PLACE.

IT IS *THEY* WHO MUST ANSWER TO THAT LITTLE GIRL'S PARENTS, NOT US.

I KNOW I'VE DONE NOTHING WRONG.

THAT'S PEACE ENOUGH.

*ISSUE No. 5 --Tone.



IN THE MEANTIME, WE CAN ONLY WAIT FOR THE BOARD'S FINAL DECISION. NO SENSE GETTING IN A HUFF IN THE INTERIM.

BESIDES-- WHEN THEY *DO* CLEAR US, THERE IS THE SMALL MATTER OF THAT *CAPED STRANGER* WHO APPEARED AT KINCAID'S RESIDENCE.

THEY DON'T KNOW ABOUT OUR LITTLE RED HERO YET. *HE'S* OUR ONLY LEAD IN THIS CASE.

AND I HEAR HE MIGHT HAVE SOME CONNECTION TO THOSE *ALLEYWAY* INCIDENTS.

AS FOR PUTTING ON A HAPPY FACE... **SORRY**. I'M NOT AS PERFECT AS YOU.



BUT!

IF IT'LL MAKE YOU FEEL HAPPIER, I'LL PUT ME ROSE COLORED GLASSES ON AND PRETEND LIKE ALL IS SO *VERY VERY WONDERFUL!*

THERE NOW, I FEEL **500000** MUCH BETTER!

ISN'T LIFE *GRAND!*

THAT IT IS, SIR.

I *ESPECIALLY* LIVE FOR THESE SARCASTIC MOOD SHIFTS OF YOURS. QUITE UPLIFTING.

AS THE SUN SHINES BRIGHT THE NEXT DAY, WANDA BLAKE AND HER DAUGHTER CYAN TAKE TIME TO ENJOY THE WARMTH.



DID YOU HAVE A FUN WALK, CYAN?

NOPE!

YOU MEAN YES! CAN YOU SAY YES?

CHESS!

THAT'S A GOOD GIRL.

MAMA'S GLAD WE WENT FOR A WALK. SO IS SHANNA. CAN YOU SAY SHANNA?

SHA-SHAW.

RIGHT!



MAMA! MAMA!

YES, DEAR. WHAT IS IT?

JOOZE!

YOU WANT SOME JUICE?

NOPE.



YOU MEAN YES. HOW DO YOU ASK?

PEEZ!

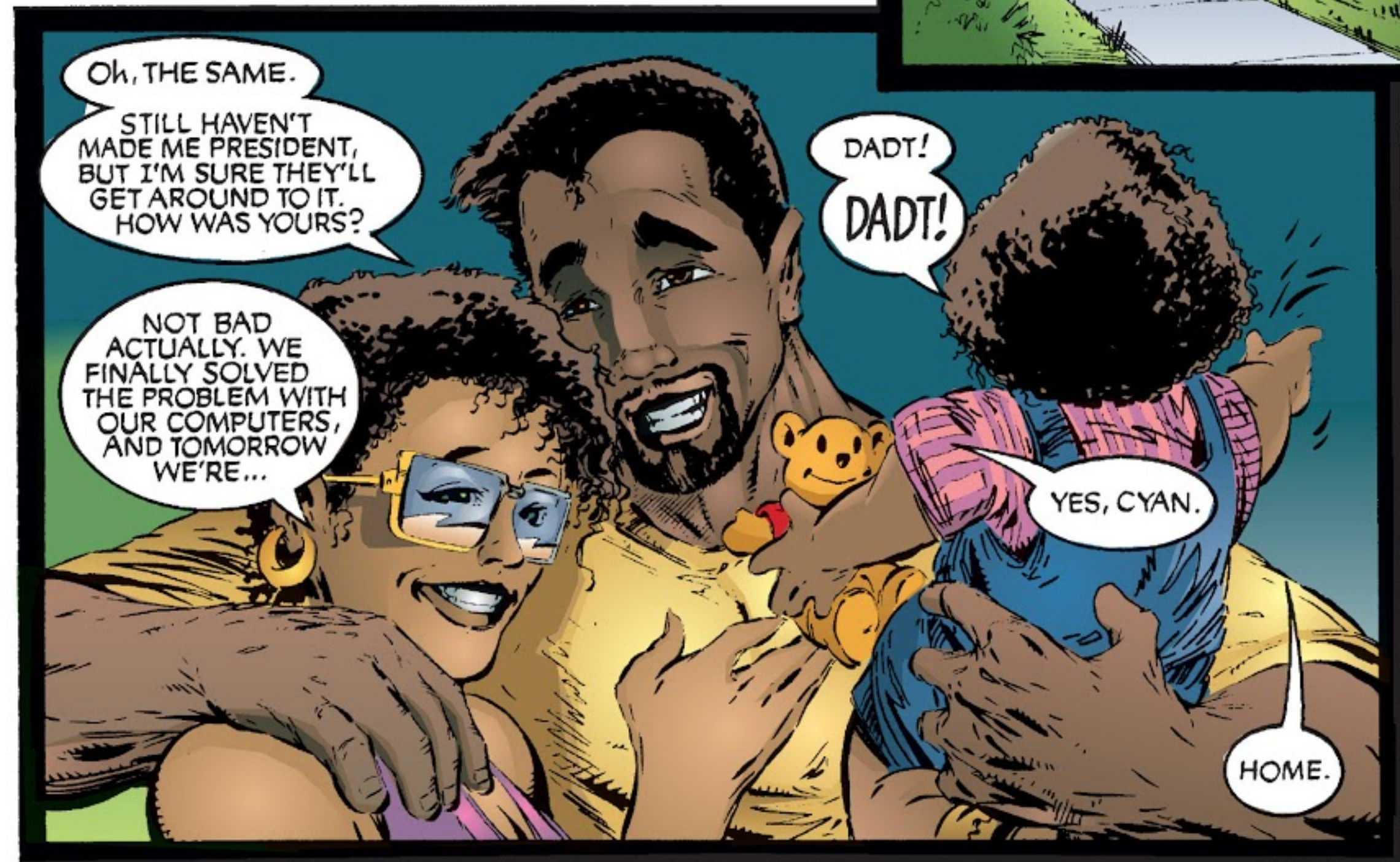
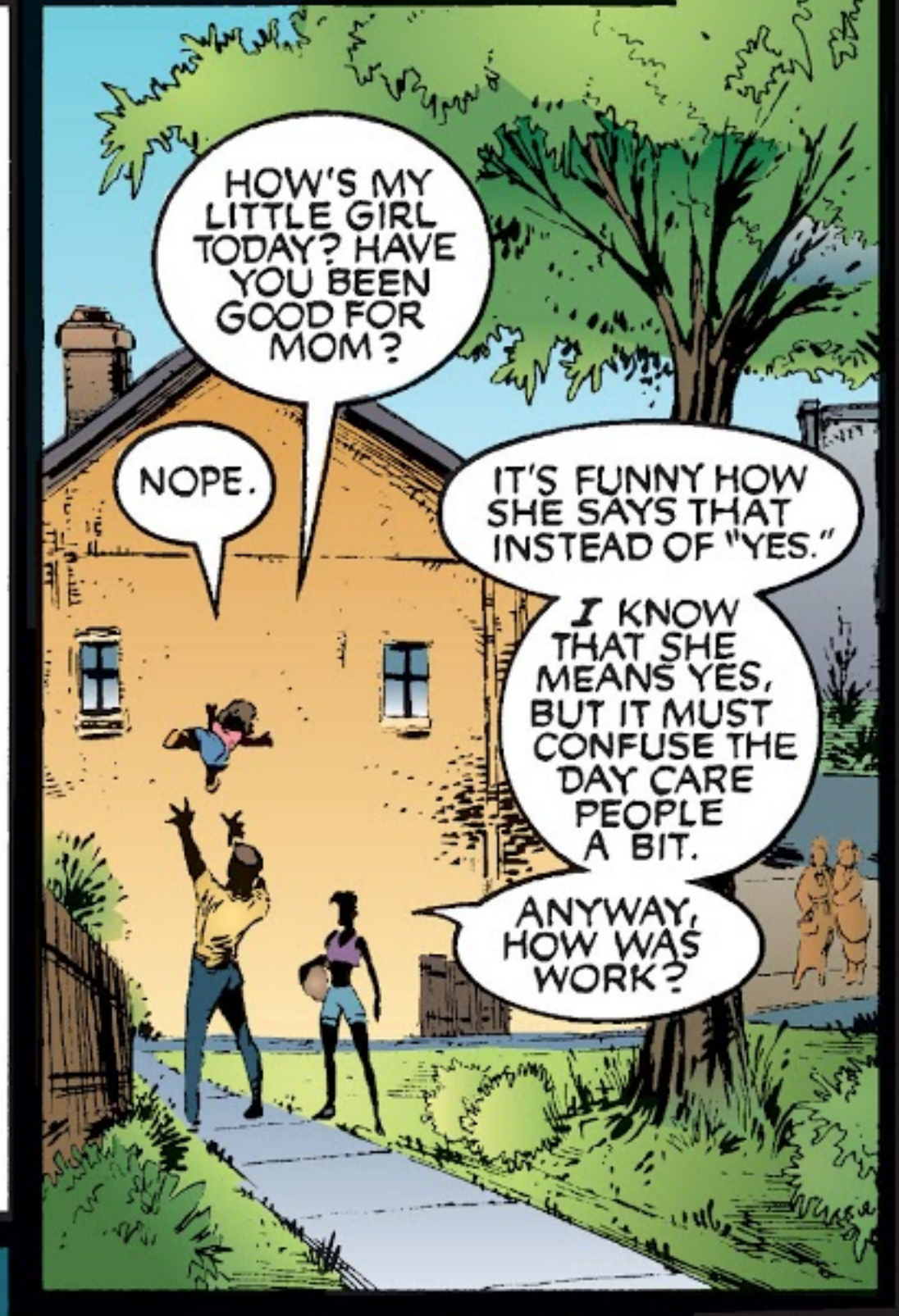
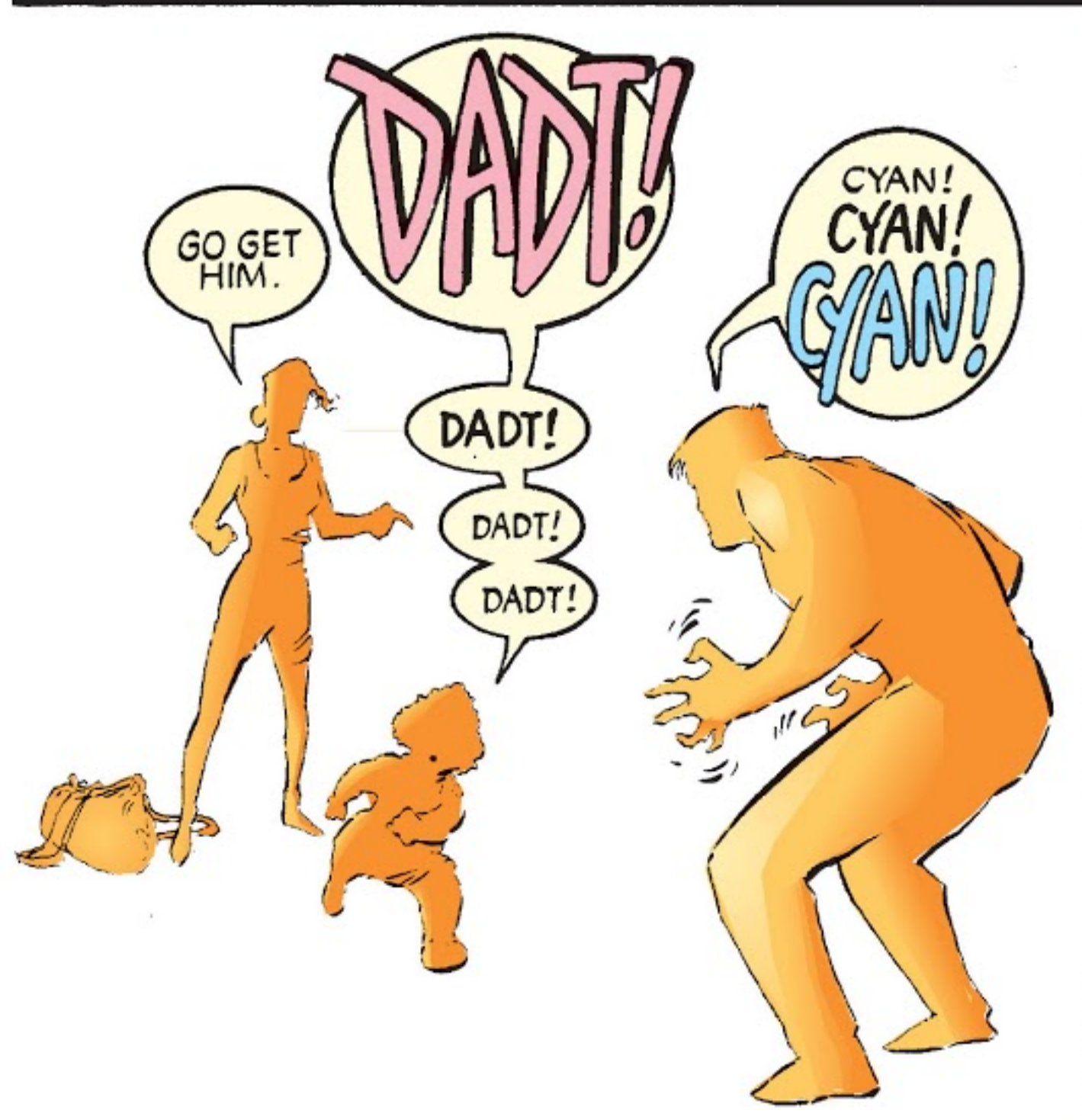
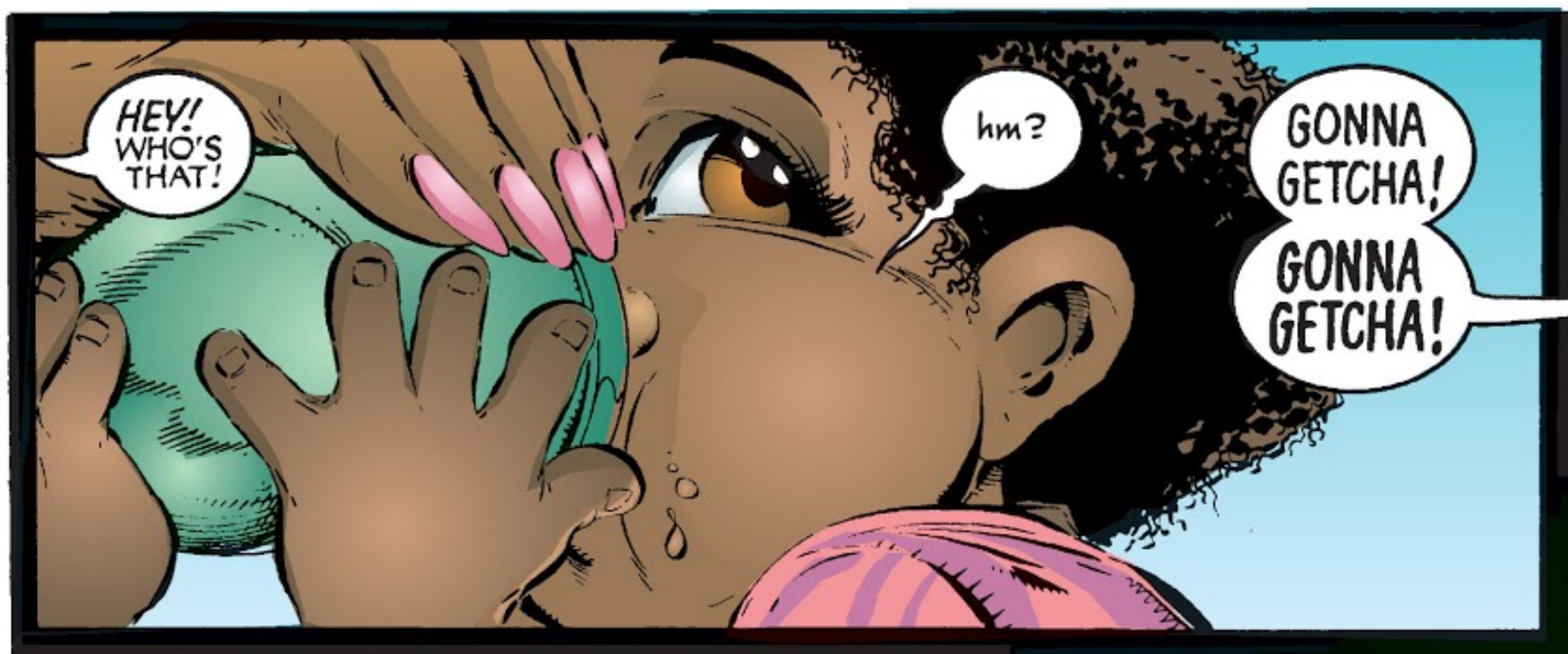
THAT'S A GOOD GIRL.

COME SIT ON MAMA SO YOU DON'T SPILL ANY.

SHA-SHAW!

ARF!

NO. SHANNA CAN'T HAVE ANY JUICE. WE'LL GET HER SOME WATER WHEN WE GET HOME.





OKAY, SWEETIE, WE'RE ALMOST THERE.

YES. YOU CAN WATCH YOUR WINNIE-THE-POOH TAPE.

POOH.

LOOKS LIKE YOU HAVE COMPANY. I DON'T GET WHY YOU GUYS CAN'T LEAVE YOUR WORK AT THE OFFICE.

DON'T KEEP HIM TOO LONG, FELLAS.

YES, SWEETIE.

HERE, TERRY, I'LL TAKE HER. IT'S TIME FOR HER TO EAT, ANYWAYS.

MAMA HOME!

OH, OH! YOU'RE GONNA FALL! READY--GO SEE YOUR MOM.



NOW, WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU GUYS?

BEAUTIFUL FAMILY YOU HAVE THERE, MR. FITZ-GERALD.

SURE'D BE A SHAME IF SOMETHING WERE TO HAPPEN TO THEM.

REAL SHAME.



MIDNIGHT. THE BACK STREETS OF MANHATTAN'S LOWER EAST SIDE.

FRIENDS SHARE THEIR BOTTLES AND STORIES WITH EACH OTHER.

THEY ALSO SHARE ANYTHING ELSE THEY MIGHT HAVE IN COMMON WITH ONE ANOTHER.

FLINTSTONES!

MEET THE FLINTSTONES!

THEY'RE A MODERN STONE-AGE FA-MI-LY. FROM THE TOWN OF BEDROCK—THEY'RE A PAGE RIGHT OUT OF HIS-TO-RY. WHEN YOU—

MEET THE FLINTSTONES— YOU'LL HAVE A YABBA-

DABBA-DOO TIME!

A DABBA-DOO TIME!

YOU'LL HAVE A GAY OL' TIME!

WILMA!

glug-
glug-

WHOA!!

TAKE IT EASY THERE, AL. SAVE SOME FOR US.





OK, MY. I
THINK WE'RE
GETTING
TIRED.

HOW 'BOUT
ONE GREAT
STORY BEFORE
WE CALL IT
QUITS.

HEY GAREB! COME
HERE
AND TELL AL THAT
STORY ABOUT YOU
AND THE COPS
FALLING INTO THE
BIG WINDOW
AT MACY'S!

YEA,
YEA.
LET ME
FINISH
MY WHIZ
FIRST.

YOU'RE
GONNA LOVE
THIS, AL.
GAREB TELLS
THE BEST
STORIES
EVER.

OH! OH!
MAYBE
HE'LL TELL
YA ABOUT
HIS LAST
CHICK,
TOO!

THERE!

THAT'S
MUCH
BETTER.

uh?

what's
this?

BOOOO

LOOK
AT ME!
I'M A HERO
NOW!

I WANT TO
SUCK YOUR
BLOOD.

=burp=

SORRY,
CHARLIE,
I THINK I
BARFED
ON YOUR
HEAD.

GET
OUTTA
HERE!

SO, AL,
WHADDYA
THINK?!

FIGURE I
GOT THE
FORTITUDE
TO BE A TOUGH
GUY LIKE YOU?

NOTHIN'
TOUGH
ABOUT YOU
'CEPT YOUR
LOOKS.

HO HO.
VERY
FUNNY.

GAREB,
NO! YOU
SHOULDN'T
HAVE PUT
THAT--

UH?

ZIP

THE MASK
MOVED
ITSELF. HOW'D
IT DO THAT?

YUURK!

AL! HELP HIM!
HE CAN'T
BREATHE!

THAT DAMN
MASK'S
TRYING TO
SUFFOCATE
HIM!

GURGT

GAREB.
YOU OKAY?

huh - huh -
y - yeah -
i think so.

I'M SORRY--
BUT I DON'T HAVE
ANY CONTROL
OVER THIS.

YOU
HAVE TO
BELIEVE
ME.

I'LL BE O-O-KAY.
DON'T WORRY.

BUT I GOTTA
TELL YA, NOT BEING
A-ABLE TO-- BREATHE
LIKE THAT-- WELL,
IT WAS ALMOST
AS BAD AS--
AS--

-- BEING
AROUND ONE
OF THEM
JURASSIC FARTS
OF BOBBIE'S.

HAR HAR!
THAT GAREB!
ALWAYS THE
KIDDER!

GASP!!!



I APPRECIATE
YOUR HUMOR.

BUT I HAVE
TO TELL YOU--
THIS IS NOT
FUNNY. NONE OF
IT IS. I CAN'T CONTAIN
THIS COSTUME'S MOVEMENTS.
WHEN IT PERCEIVES AN
ENEMY, IT MAKES ITS
OWN CHOICES.

WHY'D IT
ATTACK
GAREB?
CONSIDER HIM
A HOSTILE?

DON'T
ASK.

I HAVEN'T
A GODDAMN
CLUE HOW
ANY OF THIS
HAPPENS.

YET,
FOR SOME
REASON, I
FEEL I
NEED THIS
OUTFIT.

SO JUST
LEAVE IT
ALONE.

THEN, SUDDENLY...



no.

AL'S MIND EXPLODES.
HE BELIEVES IT'S THE
ALCOHOL.

IT'S NOT.

THEN SUDDENLY, THE
PICTURES BECOME CLEARER.

THE CLUES HAVE
BEEN THERE
ALL THE
TIME.

HE HAD THOUGHT
THE COFFIN WAS
A REMINDER OF
HIS DEATH. IN A
WAY, IT WAS. BUT
IT ALSO MEANT
SO MUCH MORE.

THE FLAG!

THAT'S THE MISSING PIECE
OF THE PUZZLE.

AND THE SKULL!

IT SIGNIFIES DEATH.
NOT THE GRIM REAPER,
AS HIS INSTINCTS
WERE TELLING HIM,
BUT THE FACE OF
HIS KILLER.

NEWLY-UNBLOCKED
IMAGES COME POURING
INTO HIS MEMORY'S VOID.

HE SEES THE FACE OF
DEATH SPRINGING FORTH
LIKE AN EVIL WEED,
TO CHOKE OFF THE
THINGS AROUND IT.

THEN... SUDDENLY, FINALLY... IT MAKES SENSE.
ALL OF IT.

THE FLAG
DIDN'T SIGNIFY
PATRIOTISM...

IT WAS
THE KILLER'S
EMPLOYER.

THE FACE OF DEATH WAS
NOTHING MORE THAN A
MASK. OR, MORE
SPECIFICALLY... MAKE-UP!

AND THE
FINAL PIECE.
IT NOW
SEEMS SO
OBVIOUS.

"HOW COULD I HAVE
BEEN SO BLIND,"
THINKS AL.

"IT'S
NOT MY
WEDDING.

"IT'S HIS NAME!

"IT WASN'T A
CHURCH...

"DAMMIT!
IT WASN'T
CHURCH--

--IT WAS...



Nooooooooooooooooooooo

CHAPEL





SPAWN

image

13
AUG

DIGITAL
EDITION



McFARLANE
MARIE

ANOTHER ONE.
THINK OF ANOTHER ONE.

Uh... YES. IT WAS THE SECOND GAME OF THE DOUBLEHEADER. WE'D LOST THE FIRST, BUT WERE TIED IN THE BOTTOM OF THE LAST INNING OF THE SECOND ONE. I'D REACHED FIRST ON A WALK, NEVER WAS MUCH OF A HITTER, THEN STOLE SECOND BASE EASILY. I COULDN'T HIT, BUT NO ONE EVER OUTRAN ME. STANDING ON SECOND, FEELING GOOD ABOUT BEING THE POTENTIAL WINNING RUN, I LOOKED OVER TO BEHIND THE THIRD BASE DUGOUT WHERE WANDA WAS SITTING. SHE SMILED AND STOOD UP SO I COULD SEE HER. THE NEXT BATTER SINGLED TO CENTER, AND I WAS OFF. UNFORTUNATELY, THEIR FIELDER HAD A ROCKET FOR AN ARM. THE BALL, THE CATCHER AND I ARRIVED AT HOME ALL AT THE SAME INSTANT. I WAS OUT, IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE. WHEN THE DUST FROM THE COLLISION HAD CLEARED, THEY HAD TO CARRY ME OFF THE FIELD. I HAD BROKEN MY ANKLE. DON'T EVEN REMEMBER IF WE HAD WON THAT GAME 'CAUSE THE BEST PART CAME AFTER.



ON THE WAY BACK FROM THE HOSPITAL, WANDA SAT CLOSE TO ME. SHE FELT SORRY FOR ME THAT I WOULDN'T GET TO PLAY BALL ANYMORE. ME, TOO, I GUESS. OTHER THAN FIGHT AND KILL, BASEBALL WAS THE ONLY OTHER THING I DID WELL.

BUT I STILL REMEMBER LIKE IT WAS YESTERDAY HOW WANDA CARED FOR AND PAMPERED ME SO I WOULDN'T BE IN PAIN. THAT NIGHT WE MADE LOVE 'TIL THE SUN STARTED COMING UP. MY FOOT STILL THROBBING, SHE MADE ME FORGET EVERYTHING. HER TOUCH EASED MY MIND AND DROVE ME CRAZY AT THE SAME TIME. AND THAT NIGHT, OUR LOVING EACH OTHER, IT WAS ALL SO PERFECT. SO VERY, VERY PERFECT.

PiNG

ALL THAT'S GONE NOW.

SO I HAVE TO KEEP REMINDING MYSELF OF WHAT HE STOLE. HAVE TO KEEP TELLING MYSELF THESE STORIES. OVER AND OVER. BUILD UP MY RAGE. MY HATE.

THE MORE ANGRY I AM, THE LESS I'LL NEED TO RELY ON MY POWERS. CAN'T AFFORD TO USE THEM UNLESS IT'S ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY. I SOMEHOW SENSE THE DRAINAGE. HOW I'VE FOOLISHLY USED ABOUT TWENTY PERCENT ALREADY. IT'S CLEAR THAT I HAVE TO COUNT ON MYSELF. NOT THESE POWERS.

PiNG

Tek
Tek
Tek

WHAT'S IMPORTANT IS WANDA!
I HAVE TO FOCUS ON THAT.

THE DEVIL TOLD ME THAT ONCE MY POWER IS EXHAUSTED I'LL BE BANISHED FROM EARTH FOREVER. I'D MUCH RATHER GET WANDA BACK, SOLVE MY PROBLEMS, AND NOT USE THESE POWERS AS A CRUTCH.

PiNG

IT'S ALMOST LIKE BEING HUMAN AGAIN.

SINCE I'M NOT, IT'S TIME TO NAIL THE SCUMBAG WHO HELPED ME INTO THIS BIZARRE SITUATION.

THIS SADISTIC GAME.

POK POK POK P

BZiNG

C'MON! C'MON!
C'MON!

KILL 'EM! GET HIM!
GET HIM! YEA!

C'MON. C'MON.
C'MON. C'MON. C'MON.

POK PO



PING
Pok
Pok
Pok
Tek-a-Tek

AW **COOL!** NAILED HIM.

JUST GOTTA GET ONE MORE GUY AND I'M INTO LEVEL SIX.

THIS GAME'S RAD.

ZING!!

BLOW!
BLOW!

Pok
Pok
Pok
Pok

CHAPEL.

USED TO CALL HIM A FRIEND... ONCE. HAD A FEW LAUGHS TOGETHER.

THEN HE CHANGED. BECAME JUST LIKE ME. OR MAYBE I BECAME LIKE HIM. DOESN'T MATTER NOW.

I'D HEARD HE WAS BEING CONSIDERED AS A RECRUIT FOR THE YOUNGBLOOD PROGRAM. SEEMED LIKE THIS SENT HIM ON A GLORY STREAK TRYING TO PROVE HIS WORTH TO THE BRASS. ALWAYS READY FOR ACTION. ALWAYS READY TO KILL. JUST LIKE ME. FUNNY HOW HIRED ASSASSINS LIKE US COULD FIND DEATH TO BE THE COMMON LINK TO OUR ADMIRATION FOR EACH OTHER. DEATH.

THE ONE THING WE COULD ALWAYS TALK ABOUT OVER A BEER.

AND WOMEN.

EVERY TIME I SAW HIM, HE HAD ONE OR TWO ALL OVER HIM. "THE DON JUAN OF KILLERS," I CALLED HIM. NEVER DATED ANY OF THEM, JUST GOT LAID THEN TOSSED THEM ASIDE. HE SAID RELATIONSHIPS WERE TOO MUCH TROUBLE.

HE EVEN OFFERED TO TAKE WANDA OFF MY HANDS ONCE A WEEK IF I GOT TIRED OF HER. THE PIG KNEW HOW MUCH I LOVED HER. DIDN'T SEEM TO MATTER, HE ACTUALLY THOUGHT HE'D BE DOING ME A FAVOR.



7345645324 **9**

LOT BETTER THAN THAT SUCKY SHAFT GAME. THAT WAS LIMP.

OUCH!

I'D NEVER LET MY NAME GO ON A BAD GAME.

HE MUST HAVE NEEDED THE CASH.

Pok-A-Pok Tek Tek Tek Tek



C'MON C'MON

I BET I CAN GET A **BAZILLION** POINTS ON THIS ONE.

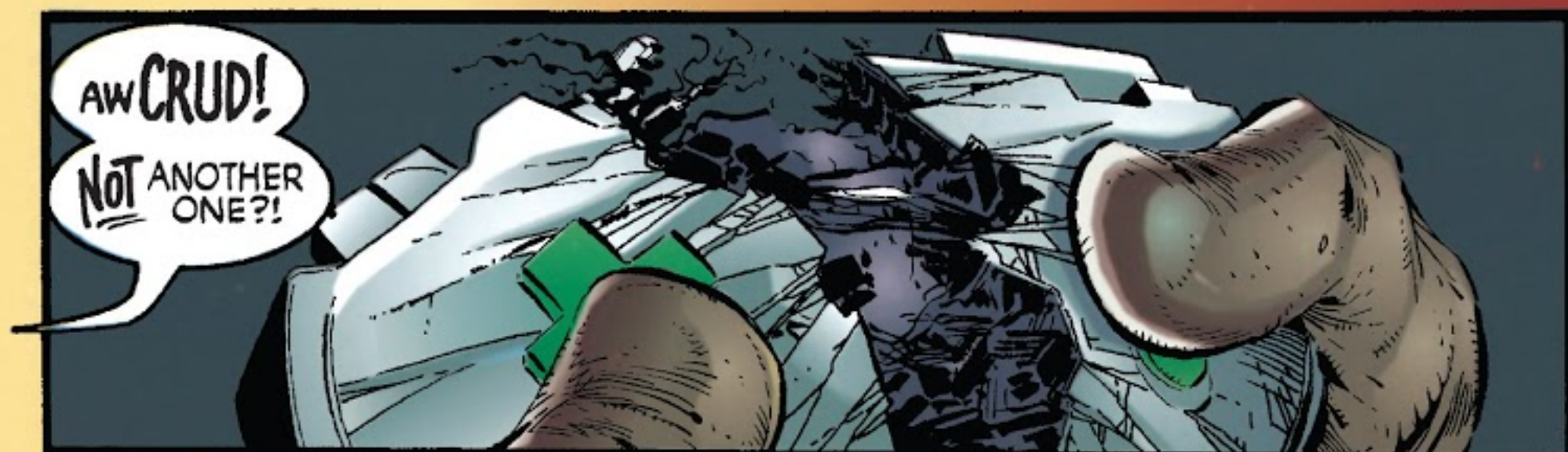


KILL 'EM!
OVER THERE,
NOW
KILL 'EM!

BAP
BAP
BAP
BAP
Pok
Pok

BAP!

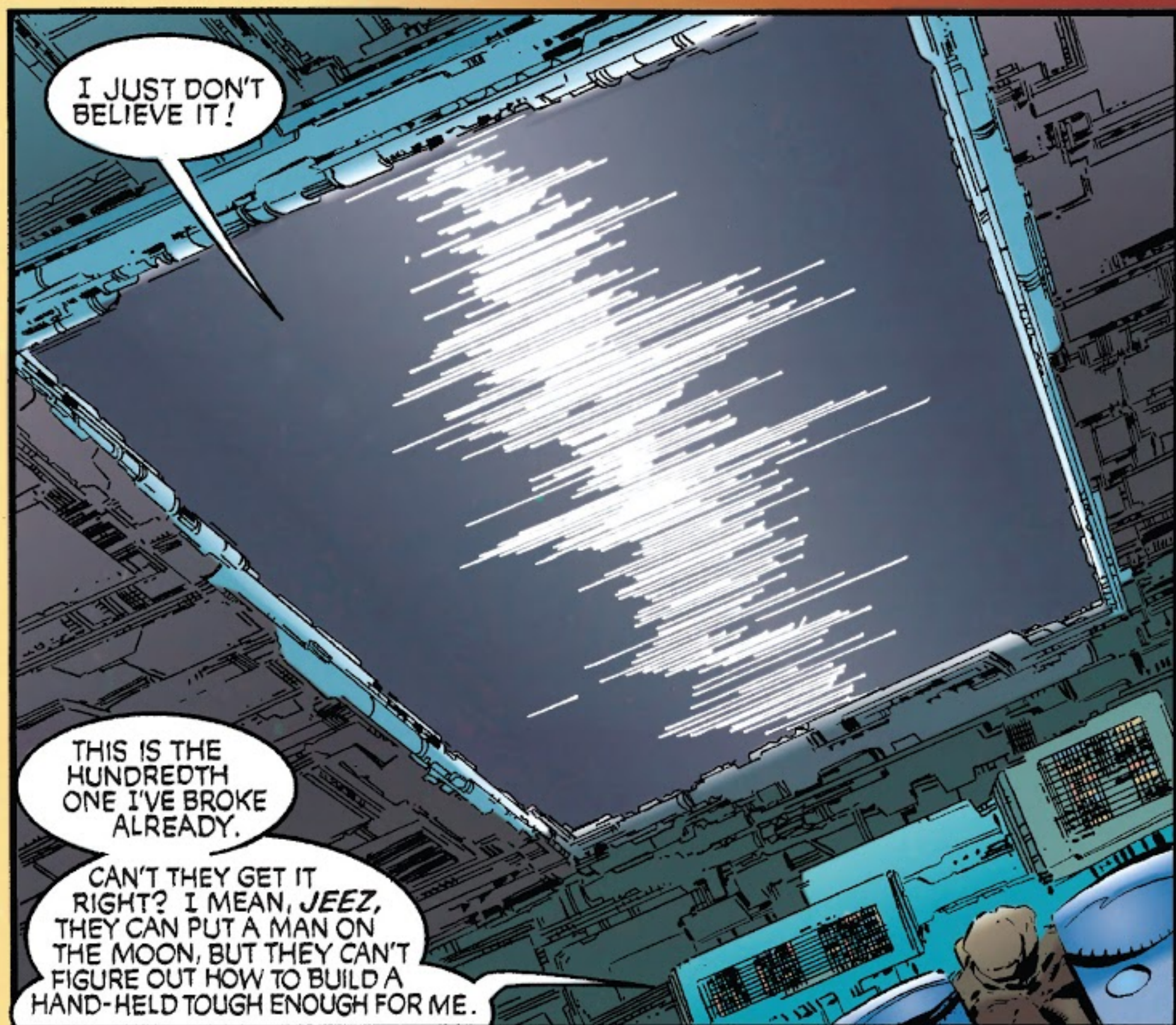




CHAPEL DID ME ONE FAVOR, THOUGH. DURING HIS REVIEW PERIOD BEFORE HIS INDUCTION INTO YOUNGBLOOD, HE BROUGHT ME TO WASHINGTON, D.C., TO SEE THE GROUP'S CENTRAL HEADQUARTERS.



THE YOUNGBLOOD PROGRAM HAD BEEN INTERESTED IN ME AS A CANDIDATE. I GUESS THEY WANTED TO SCHMOOZE ME A BIT. LUCKY FOR ME. I GOT TO LEARN THE BASIC LAYOUT OF THE JOINT. IT'S NOT CHANGED ALL THAT MUCH OVER THE LAST FIVE YEARS.



THE PLACE IS STILL RIGGED WITH HEAT SENSORS. ANYTHING EVEN REMOTELY HUMAN CAN BE DETECTED. MY BODY DOESN'T TRIP THE ALARM, WHICH MEANS I'M NOT "REMOPLY HUMAN."

NO GREAT SURPRISE THERE.

BY HIDING IN A NEWLY-EMPTIED CANNISTER AMONG SUPPLIES BEING STORED, IT WAS AMAZINGLY EASY TO BE DELIVERED TO THE PROPER LEVEL. I'M LEFT TO WAIT FOR HIS RETURN.

DAYS. WEEKS. HE WOULD HAVE TO RETURN SOMETIME.

I WANTED TO BE THERE.

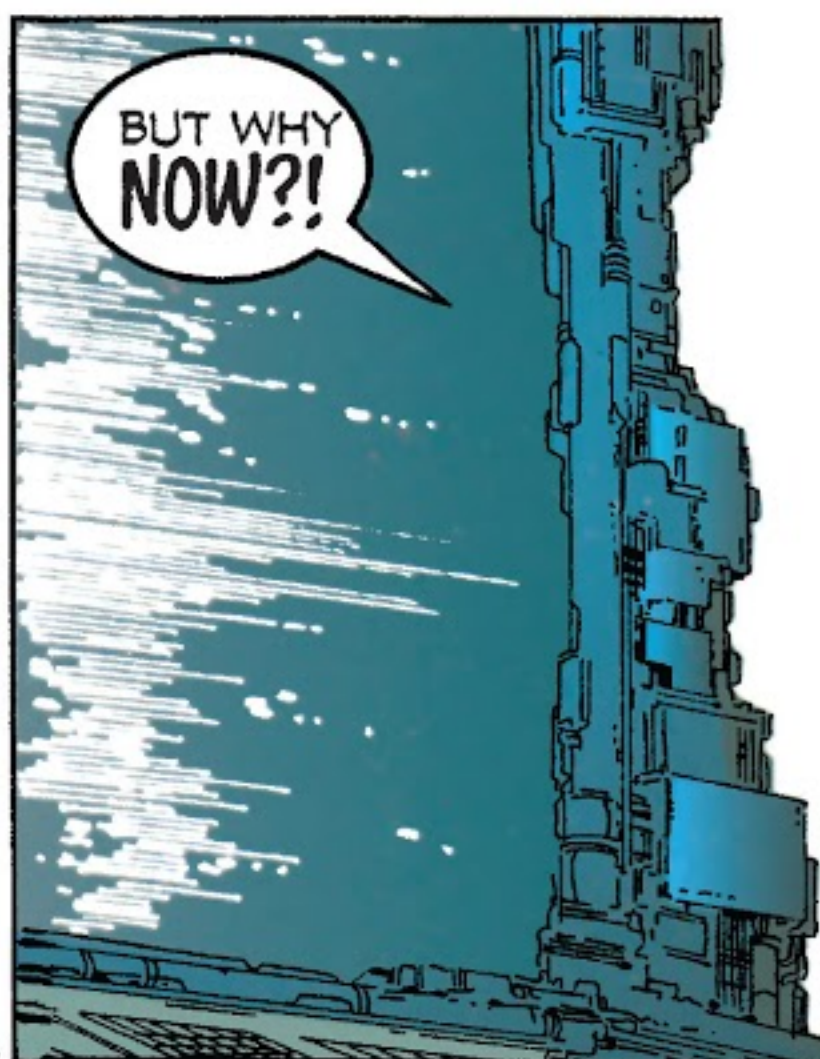


NICE INCENTIVE PROGRAM. AIN'T MY FAULT I GOT STUMPS FOR FINGERS.

THEY HAD A HEART ATTACK WHEN I ASKED FOR AN ARCADE GAME.

SO I SAT, AND AS EACH DAY PASSED, MY HATRED SOFTENED A BIT. I THEN BEGAN TO TELL MYSELF ABOUT WANDA, REMEMBERING THE GREAT TIMES WE HAD. THE SPECIAL MOMENTS. EACH THING I CAN RECALL ENHANCES THE MOOD.

MY ANGER GROWS AGAIN.



Oh Noo, wouldn't want to do that, now would we?

BADROCK. BADROCK! ARE YOU THERE?



WE'RE STILL HERE IN THE TRAINING ROOM. THOUGHT I'D CHECK ON YOU TO SEE HOW YOU WERE DOING.



PART OF BEING A YOUNGBLOOD INVOLVES DISCERNING WHEN AND WHERE YOUR TIME IS APPROPRIATE FOR OUR NEEDS.

GET MY DRIFT?

uh?

Uh. Y-yes sir. ABSOLUTELY. DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME, SIR, I HAVEN'T EVEN OPENED THAT NEW GAME THEY SENT OVER.

GOOD. HOW'S EVERYTHING ELSE?

SO DOES MY HATE. YOU CAN HATE SOMEONE BUT NOT BE ANGRY AT THEM. AND YOU CAN BE ANGRY AT SOMEONE BUT NOT HATE THEM. IT TAKES A VERY EVIL PERSON TO MAKE YOU COMBINE THE TWO.

CHAPEL HAS BECOME THAT.

SO I WAITED SOME MORE.

FINALLY, HE SHOWED. BY THE TIME I COULD MAKE A MOVE TO THE TRAINING ROOM, TWO OTHERS HAD JOINED HIM THERE. WHAT WAS HE TRAINING FOR? HE'D ALWAYS SAID, "PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT. BUT YOU NEED TO PRACTICE ON THINGS THAT ARE ALIVE."

I HOPE HIS TWO COMPANIONS ARE SMART ENOUGH NOT TO TURN THEIR BACKS ON HIM.



COULDN'T BE BETTER!

IF HE COULD KILL A FRIEND,
EVERYTHING ELSE IS EASY.

AND
ENJOYABLE.

IS THIS
THE *BEST* TEST
MATERIAL WE
CAN FIND?!

I'M
WASTING MY
BLOODY *TIME*!

THEN
WATCH
OUT,
TOUGH
GUY...

... 'CAUSE
HERE COME
THOSE NEW *WARRIOR*
DROIDS YOU ORDERED
FOR PRACTICE.

FINALLY...
SOMETHING
TO SINK MY
TEETH INTO.

BADROCK, CAN
YOU TELL RIPTIDE IT'S
TIME TO RELIEVE YOU AT
SECTOR ONE?

AYE AYE,
CAPTAIN.

DON'T
FORGET YOUR
MEETING AT
THREE.

HEY,
GUYS!!

FORGOT TO
MENTION ABOUT
OUR MEETING WITH THE
C.A.A. GROUP IN TWENTY
MINUTES. TIME TO
SHUT IT DOWN.

NOT ME!

YOU BABIES
QUIT IF YOU
WANT.

HIS LAUGH IS
BARELY MUFFLED
AS IT LEECHES
THROUGH THE
DOOR AND DOWN
THE HALLWAY.

DAMN HIM.
STILL AS COCKY
AS EVER.

GOOD.
DIDN'T WANT
THIS TO BE
TOO EASY.

'CAUSE WITH MY
POWERS, I CAN'T
LOSE. NO MATTER
WHAT HAPPENS
IN THE NEXT FEW
HOURS, I'VE
GOT THE WINNING
HAND.

I'M
JUST
GETTING
WARMED
UP.

NOW THERE'S
A CHANGE.



SLAM



THE DEAFENING SOUND OF STEEL RAMMING STEEL STARTLES THE THREE YOUNGBLOOD MEMBERS. AT THE DOOR, THEY SEE A FIGURE STANDING POISED FOR THE CHALLENGE. HE DOESN'T MOVE A MUSCLE AS HE CALMLY SCANS THE, CONSIDERING HOW TO USE IT ALL TO HIS ADVANTAGE. ALTHOUGH HE DOESN'T MOVE, HIS CAPE AND CHAINS SEEM TO FLIT ABOUT, SNAPPING LIKE CAGED ANIMALS GETTING READY TO FEAST.

HE SPOTS CHAPEL NO MORE THAN THIRTY FEET AWAY, AND HIS HEART, IF THAT'S TRULY WHAT IT IS, SKIPS A BEAT. AND YET, HE DOES NOT MOVE. HE HAS DECIDED THAT ANY ACTION WITH THESE YOUNGBLOOD MIGHT BE A DRAIN ON HIS POWERS. BESIDES, IT'S ONLY ONE OF THE THREE HE'S CONCERNED WITH.

THOUGH HE WISHES NOT TO WASTE ANY MORE OF HIS PRECIOUS NEW POWERS, HE KNOWS HE HAS NO CHOICE.



TEAM LEADER SHAFT COMMANDS THE RESPECT OF THOSE HE LEADS AND THOSE HE FIGHTS. NO SUCH LUCK WITH THIS DEAD SOLDIER.

MAKE A MOVE, MISTER, AND I'LL HAVE TWENTY AGENTS ON YOUR BACK. DON'T KNOW HOW YOU GOT IN, BUT YOU'RE NOT GOING TO WALK OUT.

MAKE YOUR MOVE.



EVERYONE FREEZES, BUT THE MOMENT IS BROKEN BY THE SUDDEN ENTRANCE OF ANOTHER.

YO DUDES, WHAT'S UP!?

SOMEONE TRIPPED THE SILENT ALARM!

SO, WHERE'S THE ACTION?

uh?

GREAT! ANOTHER MEMBER. YOU MUST BE FROM THE YOUNGBLOOD ACADEMY.

AWESOME CAPE, DUDE.

ENOUGH. IT'S TIME TO END THIS PHASE OF THINGS.

SPAWN LIFTS HIS HANDS AND GESTURES EVER SO SLOWLY. LIKE A MODERN-DAY DRACULA HE BEGINS TO MORPH IN SIZE AND SHAPE, SHRINKING AND TWISTING, RADIATING COLORS OF GREENISH HUES, UNTIL HE IS COMPLETELY GONE FROM SIGHT, SAVE FOR THE TWINKLING OF POWER RESIDUE.

THIS WAS A PRECALCULATED ENERGY DRAIN. THERE WAS NO OTHER CHOICE.



Wow!

THAT WAS COOL!



PARDON ME... FELLAS?

HE TOOK CHAPEL WITH HIM.

HE WASN'T THE ONLY ONE TO ZAP OUTTA HERE.

uh?

WHAT?!



OKAY, LISTEN UP! DIEHARD, YOU SWEEP THE COMPLEX FOR SIGNS OF OTHER SECURITY BREACHES. IF IT'S CLEAR, NOTIFY HEAD-QUARTERS I'VE JUST REASSIGNED OUR UNIT.

WHATEVER!

BEDROCK...

BADROCK.

CHECK THE DATA-BASES FOR ANYONE WITH POWERS SIMILAR TO OUR INTRUDERS'. THEN, ACCESS ALL DATA CONNECTED TO CURRENT SUPER-FREAK ACTIVITY!

RIGHT!

I'M ALSO GOING TO SEE IF I CAN GET A LOCK ON THE PERSONAL GUIDANCE SIGNAL HE CARRIES. SHOULD PINPOINT HIM WITHIN TEN MINUTES.



GOOD!

NOW, ALERT THE OTHER MEMBERS TO GET THEIR REARS DOWN HERE! PRONTO!

WE'VE GOT A CODE ONE EVENT!



TIME TO SHOW THE BAD GUYS WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU TRY TO MESS WITH US.



"IF CHAPEL DOESN'T KILL HIM FIRST."

IT'S LATE FOR TERRY FITZGERALD AND WANDA BLAKE. MOST OF THEIR NEIGHBORS IN THE NEW YORK SUBURB OF QUEENS HAVE BEEN ASLEEP FOR HOURS, NESTLED IN WARM BEDS.

TERRY WISHES HE WAS DOING LIKEWISE.

AS AN AGENT OF THE UNITED STATES SECURITY GROUP (U.S.S.G.) HE'S ALWAYS FACED THE POSSIBILITY OF DANGER. TERRY DISTANCED HIMSELF FROM THAT SIDE OF THINGS YEARS AGO WHEN HE SHIFTED OVER TO ITS INTER-CULTURAL LIASON UNIT.

AFTER WHAT HAPPENED TO AL, HE NEEDED A BREAK FROM FRONT-LINE ACTIVITY.

HE THOUGHT HE'D FINALLY GOTTEN IT.

AS IT IS, HE STANDS, STARING OUT THE WINDOW, NERVOUSLY FIDGETING WITH THE CURTAIN STRING. THE CAUSE OF HIS RESTLESSNESS: A NONE-TOO-SUBTLE THREAT OF HARM TO HIS FAMILY... FROM HIS OWN AGENCY.

THIS MORNING'S THREAT* SAYS OTHERWISE. HE KNOWS THE SECURITY GROUP DOESN'T MUSCLE ITS OWN UNLESS THEY HAVE SOMETHING VERY SERIOUS.

FOR THE LIFE OF HIM, HE CAN'T IMAGINE WHAT THAT CAN BE. THAT DOESN'T MATTER.

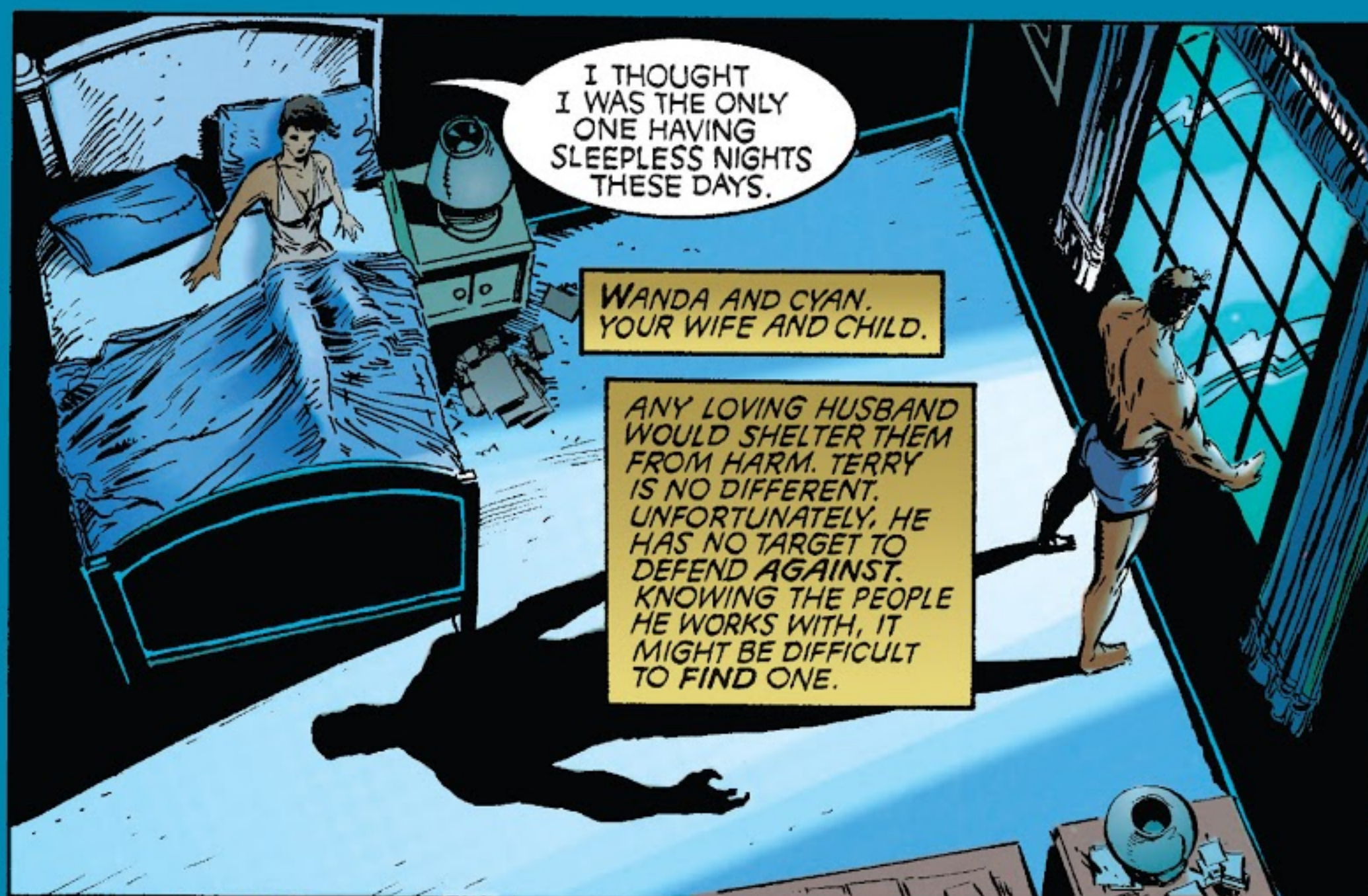
*LAST ISSUE--TOM.

THAT THEY EVEN IMAGINE A PROBLEM IS DISASTER ENOUGH. NOW HE MUST TRY TO FIND SOME ANSWERS BEFORE THINGS GET REALLY UGLY.

FIND. DETERMINE. FORMULATE. SOLVE. THESE ARE THE FOUR BASIC POINTS OF HIS TRAINING. IT SEEMS THEY LEFT ONE OUT:

Terry, is something wrong?

PROTECT.



I THOUGHT
I WAS THE ONLY
ONE HAVING
SLEEPLESS NIGHTS
THESE DAYS.

WANDA AND CYAN.
YOUR WIFE AND CHILD.

ANY LOVING HUSBAND
WOULD SHELTER THEM
FROM HARM. TERRY
IS NO DIFFERENT.
UNFORTUNATELY, HE
HAS NO TARGET TO
DEFEND AGAINST.
KNOWING THE PEOPLE
HE WORKS WITH, IT
MIGHT BE DIFFICULT
TO FIND ONE.



UNTIL HE CHOOSES A COURSE OF
ACTION, HE CAN SAY NOTHING
TO HER ABOUT HIS WORRIES.
FOR HER PART, WANDA HAS
LONG ACCEPTED THAT HIS JOB
BRINGS WITH IT A CERTAIN
DEGREE OF SECRECY.

IS IT
SOMETHING
YOU CAN TELL
ME ABOUT?



NO.

NOT
YET.

I'M
GOING TO
CHECK ON
CYAN.



AS HE GAZES AT HIS
DAUGHTER'S INNOCENT
FACE, HE WONDERS HOW
MUCH TIME IS LEFT BEFORE
SHE LEARNS THE CRUELTY
THAT PEOPLE DO TO EACH
OTHER.



... HOW
COULD
SUCH A
THING
HAPPEN?

POOR
LITTLE
FOO-FOO.

DETECTIVE SAM BURKE
IS JUST FINISHING A
MISERABLE DAY'S
WORK FIELDING THE
COMPLAINTS OF CON-
CERNED CITIZENS. SUCH
IS THE FATE OF A
POLICEMAN UNDER
INTERNAL INVESTIGATION.

I MEAN, THE ABSOLUTE GALL
OF THAT MAN. SINCE WHEN DID
GOD DIE AND LEAVE HIM
IN CHARGE?

SO. WHERE WAS I...

Oh YES! AFTER
MY HUSBAND LOCKED
HIM IN HIS OWN GARAGE...
accidentally, of course... WE
NEVER REALIZED THAT THIS
LUNATIC WOULD EVEN THINK
OF USING HIS CHAINSAW AS
A LETHAL WEAPON.

AFTER DESTROYING
HIS OWN DOOR, THE
BUGGER NEARLY
KILLED MY HUBBY!

ARE YOU
LISTENING,
YOUNG MAN?

YES,
MA'AM.

GOOD!

FOR THAT
SICK, EVIL,
SPITEFUL MAN TO
START SAWING UP MY
POOR FOO-FOO'S DOG
HOUSE WITHOUT CHECKING
TO SEE IF SHE WAS
INSIDE, WELL... *sniff*

I DON'T EVEN WANT
TO THINK WHAT COULD'VE
HAPPENED IF I DIDN'T STOP
HIM. I MEAN, IT'S NOT MY
FAULT HE FORCED ME TO GET
SO ANGRY. BESIDES, I CAN'T
BELIEVE A MAN WITH AN
ASS AS FAT AS HIS WOULD
HAVE EVEN FELT THAT
BUTCHER KNIFE IN
HIS REAR.

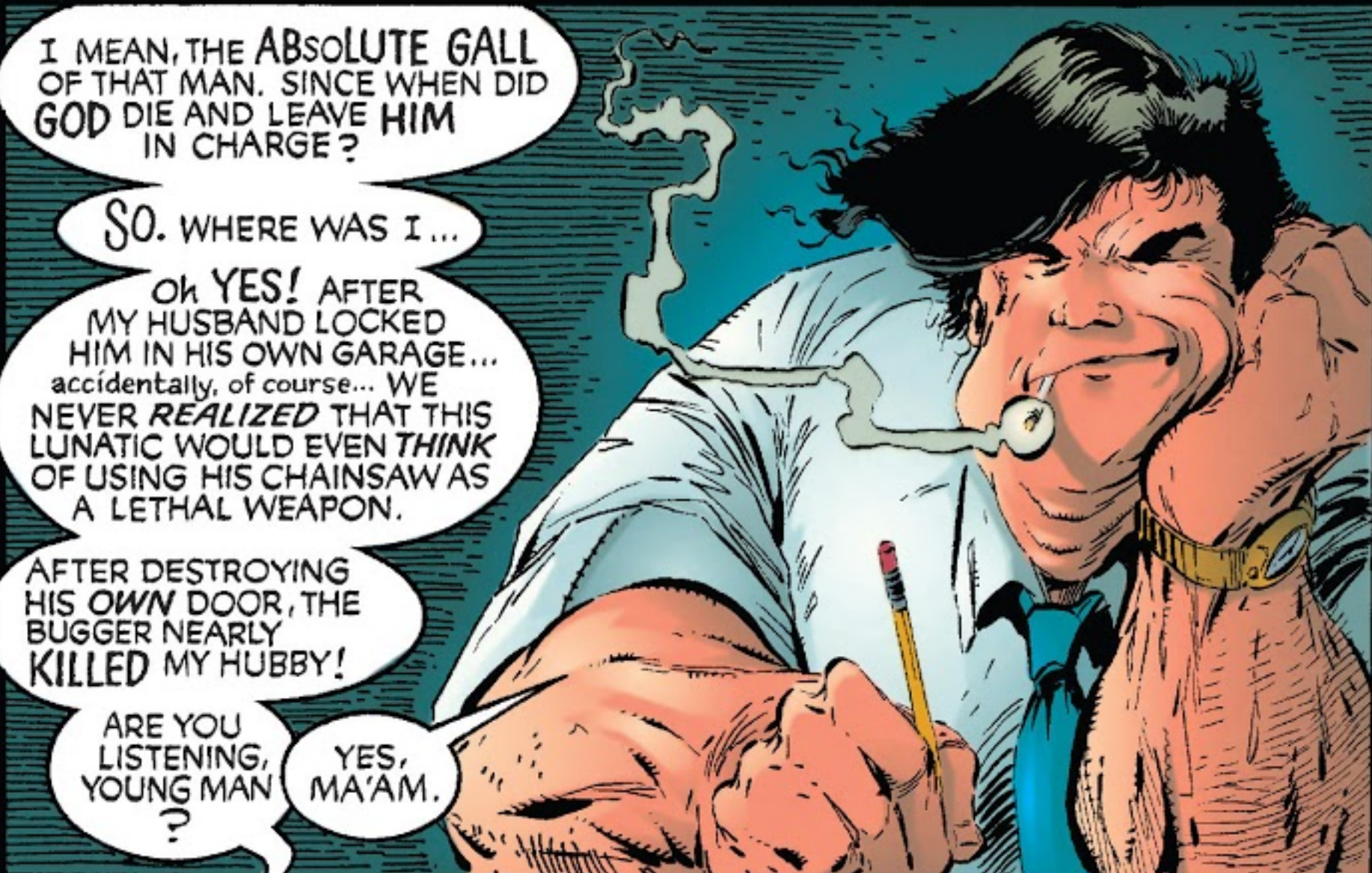
I JUST
CAN'T
BELIEVE
HE CALLED
THE COPS!

AIN'T YOUR PROBLEM
MY HUBBY TOTALLED
HIS NEW PORSCHE.

Accidentally, of course.

Um, EXCUSE
ME, SIR. GOOD
NEWS! THE
BOARD WILL BE
RELEASING
ITS DECISIONS
TOMORROW.

IF WE'RE
ACQUITTED, WE
CAN BE BACK ON
THE STREETS BY
THURSDAY. THOUGHT
YOU'D WANT
TO KNOW.



I HARDLY
STABBED HIM.
THE BIG BABY!

THANKS, TWITCH.

'CAUSE I'M
GOING TO FIND
OUR LITTLE RED
HERO THAT DAY. LET
HIM KNOW WHAT
I'VE BEEN GOING
THROUGH.

HE
OWES US,
TWITCH.

BIG
TIME!



NEARLY EIGHT THOUSAND MILES FROM YOUNGBLOOD HEADQUARTERS LIES A CERTAIN SWAMP IN BOTSWANA. A GREEN MIST SWIRLS THERE, VISIBLY TAKING FORM...

...FORMS.

THE TWO HUMAN FORMS TAKE A FEW MINUTES TO RECOVER FROM THE SADISTIC EXPERIENCE OF TELEPORTATION.

PUKING HELPS.

WHERE THE HELL ARE WE NOW?!

SURELY YOU HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN THIS PLACE ALREADY?

WHA...?

BUDDY, I DON'T PAY ATTENTION TO THE LANDSCAPE WHEN I'M WORKING.

EXACTLY.

YOU NEVER GAVE A DAMN ABOUT ANYTHING THAT CROSSED YOUR PATH. EVEN YOUR SO-CALLED FRIENDS.

WHAT HAPPENED, CHAPEL? FIGURED I'D PASS YOU IN SERVICE RANKING? MAYBE IT WAS MY HAIRCUT OR CLOTHES. YOU NEVER DID NEED ANY LOGICAL REASON TO KILL SOMEONE.

YOU JUST WANTED A TARGET. FRIEND OR FOE, WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?



BUDDY,
YOU DON'T
KNOW A
THING ABOUT
ME. NOT A
GODDAMN
THING.

IF WE'RE
HERE TO
FIGHT THEN
LET'S GET
ON WITH IT.
OTHERWISE,
GET THE
HELL OUT
OF MY
WAY!

ALWAYS
THE TOUGH GUY,
eh? I'D FORGOTTEN
HOW DEEP YOUR
ARROGANCE
COULD BE.



EVERYTHING I AM, YOU
GAVE TO ME, IN A ROUND-
ABOUT WAY. THE DEVIL
DIDN'T MAKE ME.
YOU DID.

HE ONLY
TOOK ADVANTAGE
AFTER I WAS
DEAD.

AS FOR
FIGHTING, YOU'RE
DAMN RIGHT
WE'RE GOING TO
FIGHT. AND BY THE
WAY... YOUR SIGNAL
DEVICE. I'VE
SCRAMBLED THE
SIGNAL. YOUR
FRIENDS WON'T
BE HELPING YOU
TODAY.



SPAWN REMOVES
HIS CAPE IN
PREPARATION
FOR BATTLE.

HE ISN'T
DISAPPOINTED.

BUD, YOU'RE
COMPLETELY
NUTS!!



NUTS?!

SWAK!



HAVEN'T YOU BEEN
LISTENING?

YOU KILLED ME!
STOLE EVERYTHING
FROM ME AND YOU
DON'T REMEMBER
IT!!

KHN=



WELL,
LOOK AT
WHAT YOU'VE
MADE!

I THOUGHT WE
WERE THE SAME, THAT
WE LOVED OUR COUNTRY AND
WOULD KILL FOR IT. BUT
FRIENDS... YOU DON'T
SLAUGHTER
FRIENDS.

IT WAS
THE ENEMY
WE WERE AFTER
THAT DAY.

GUESS
I MADE A
FATAL MISTAKE
IN TRUSTING
YOU.

YOU'RE
A *CRAZY*
ONE,
THAT'S FOR
SURE.

IT'S GOING TO
BE A *PLEASURE*
BREAKING YOUR
SCRAWNY LITTLE
NECK.

LET'S *END*
THIS, NOW!

YOU HAVEN'T
CHANGED IN ALL THESE
YEARS. SO FULL OF YOUR-
SELF. ALWAYS DID THINK YOU
WERE THE BEST, EVEN WITH
THE LADIES. ISN'T THAT
RIGHT... **DON JUAN
OF KILLERS!**

What
did you
call
me?

AL?

dear lord...



CHAPEL'S MIND IS ELSEWHERE FOR AN INSTANT, FOCUSED ON EVENTS YEARS PAST:



YOUR BOSS, JASON WYNN, HAD JUST GIVEN YOU A NEW ASSIGNMENT, IN BOTSWANA. YOU WOULD MIX WITH THE U.S. UNITS, WAIT FOR THINGS TO HEAT UP... THEN KILL YOUR TARGET.

YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN GET CLOSE ENOUGH TO...

...AL SIMMONS.



YES, HE WAS A FRIEND, BUT YOUR BRIEFING CALLED HIM A SPY FOR YOUR AGENCY'S ENEMIES, WHO'D BEEN FLAUNTING HIS PRESIDENTIAL STATUS AS A SMOKESCREEN.

DETAILS WERE GIVEN.



SUCH IS THE MARK OF A GOOD SOLDIER: NEVER QUESTION AUTHORITY. JUST FOLLOW ORDERS.

WHO BETTER TO KILL A SECURITY PROBLEM THAN AN OBEDIENT PUPPET. FOR YOU, CHAPEL, GETTING THE JOB DONE WAS A SOURCE OF PRIDE.

THAT PRIDE WAS STRONGER THAN ANY RELATIONSHIP. YOU EVEN BOUGHT ALL OF SIMMONS' DRINKS THAT NIGHT.

OF COURSE, YOU VERIFIED NOTHING.



WHEN THE TIME CAME, YOU CASUALLY LOADED YOUR LASER PACK...

... WALKED UP TO HIM...

... AND FRIED HIS BRAINS TO A CRISP.



A JOB WELL DONE.

NOW TO GET THE WORD OUT.

GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS CONFIRMED TODAY THAT CASUALTIES IN THE U.S./BOTSWANA CONFLICT INCLUDE LT. COL. AL SIMMONS. HE WAS BEST KNOWN FOR THE COURAGE HE SHOWED WHILE THWARTING AN ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT ON THE FORMER PRESIDENT.

ALTHOUGH NO DETAILS WERE GIVEN, A STATEMENT READ BY THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY SAID THAT HE DIED "DEFENDING HIS NATION."

SIMMONS WAS AMONG THAT ELITE BRANCH WHOSE ACTIVITIES WERE COVERT BUT BROADLY DEFINED AS "UPHOLDING THE SECURITY AND INTERESTS OF THESE UNITED STATES." SERVICES WILL BE HELD LATER THIS WEEK AT ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETARY IN VIRGINIA. BOTH THE PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENT ARE EXPECTED TO ATTEND, AS WELL AS OFFICERS FROM ALL BRANCHES OF THE ARMED SERVICES.

SIMMONS' WIDOW, WANDA BLAKE, IS IN SECLUSION AND UNAVAILABLE FOR COMMENT.



OKAY, LET'S SEE IF I GOT THIS STRAIGHT!

FORTY-THREE U.S. SOLDIERS HAVE BEEN KILLED SO FAR IN THE U.S./BOTSWANA CONFLICT, BUT THE GOVERNMENT SINGLES OUT *JUST ONE* OF THEM TO HOLD UP AS A GLOWING EXAMPLE OF TRUTH, JUSTICE AND THE AMERICAN WAY?!

WHAT ABOUT THE *OTHER* FORTY-TWO DEAD OFFICERS? IS ONLY *SIMMONS* TO BE GRANTED SAINTHOOD?



OR IS THERE SOMETHING *MORE* HERE?

CALL ME A CYNIC, BUT IS IT *JUST* COINCIDENCE THAT THE PRESIDENT IS PULLING AT OUR HEART-STRINGS AND VOWING TO BUILD U.S. ACTIVITY IN THIS WAR *JUST* AS THE POLLS SHOW HIS POPULARITY AT ROCK BOTTOM?

NICE *MOVE*, MR. PRESIDENT. *GREAT* TIMING. NOTHING LIKE A *GOOD WAR* AND A DEAD *HERO* TO HELP BOLSTER YOUR STANDING. THEN AGAIN, I COULD BE READING *TOO MUCH* INTO THIS.



TODAY, WE MARK THE PASSING OF A SOLDIER AS UNIQUELY SIGNIFICANT IN THE ARMED FORCES AS HE WAS IN THE *MEDIA*.

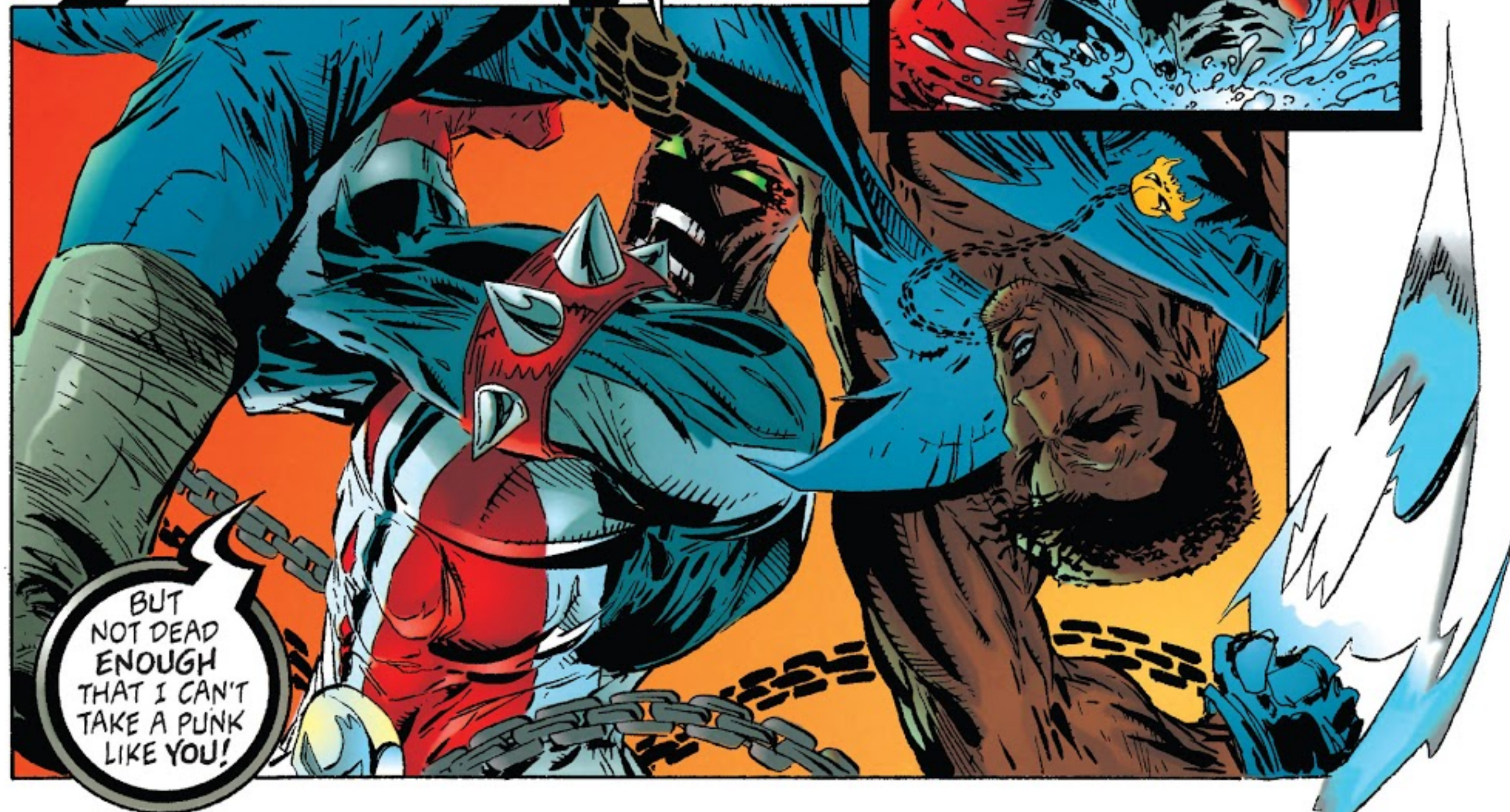
LT. COL. AL SIMMONS, WHO JUST TWO YEARS AGO WAS VOTED ONE OF OUR "TEN SEXIEST MEN" BY *PEOPLE* MAGAZINE, HAS BEEN LESS PROMINENT THIS PAST YEAR. THOUGH THIS CHARISMATIC GENTLEMAN FOUGHT FOR OUR SAFETY EVERY DAY, IT WAS HIS BRAVERY DURING THE HINCKLEY INCIDENT THAT MARKED HIM IN OUR MEMORIES.



UNCONFIRMED REPORTS SAY THAT SIMMONS WAS CAUGHT IN AN ENEMY GROUND SWEEP AND TRIED VALIANTLY TO DRAW FIRE AWAY FROM HIS FELLOW SOLDIERS.

IT IS SUCH ACTS OF COURAGE THAT MAKE US ALL PROUD OF THE WAR EFFORT IN BOTSWANA. "LT. COL. *SIMMONS*, THOUGH VERY SPECIAL IN HIS OWN RIGHT, CONSIDERED HIMSELF AN EQUAL TO ANY AND ALL WHO WOULD PUT THEIR LIVES ON THE LINE FOR FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY," SAID A PENTAGON SPOKESMAN.







MAYBE
IT'S YOU AND
MAYBE IT'S
NOT.

NEVER
COULD
STOMACH
YOUR WHINING
ALL THE
TIME...

...TRYING
TO FIX
EVERY-
THING.



YOU ALWAYS
WERE THE GOODIE-
TWO-SHOES. THINK
YOU'RE SCREWED?!

--THEN **DAMN** YOU!

IT WAS *ME*
WHO TOOK THE
SERUM, NOT YOU!
I'M THE ONE
POISONED WITH
H.I.V.!

SO **SCREW**
YOUR SOB STORY!



How
pitiful
you've
become.

I DIDN'T
TAKE THE
SERUM BE-
CAUSE WANDA
AND I WERE
TRYING TO
CONCEIVE.



SO YOU
BELIEVE WHAT
YOU WANT. I DON'T
CARE. BUT IT
IS ME...

...BACK
FROM THE
DEAD.

WITH
MORE
POWER THAN
I NEED...

...BUT
LITTLE
ELSE.

YOU DON'T
SCARE ME,
SIMMONS!
I KILLED YOU
ONCE-- I
CAN DO IT
AGAIN!



WRONG!

I'M THE
ONE HERE
IN THE POSITION
TO KILL.

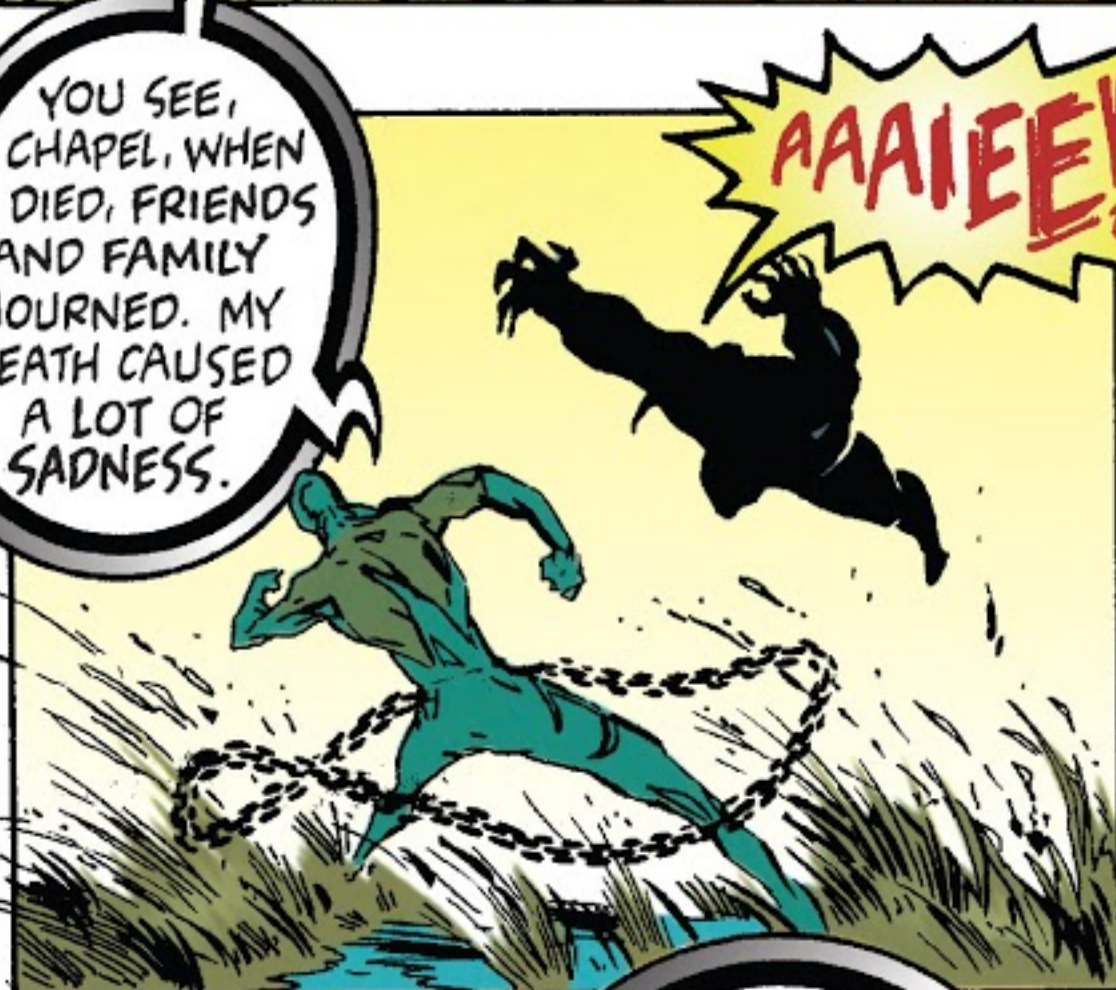
YOU'D
BE DEAD
IF THAT'S WHAT
I WANTED.



IT'S
NOT.

YOU SEE,
CHAPEL, WHEN
I DIED, FRIENDS
AND FAMILY
MOURNED. MY
DEATH CAUSED
A LOT OF
SADNESS.

AAAIEEE!



BUT IF I
KILLED YOU, NO
ONE WOULD GIVE A
CRAP. YOU DON'T HAVE
ANY FRIENDS OR
FAMILY WHO WOULD
SHED A SINGLE
TEAR.

ONLY
THING YOU
EVER CARED
ABOUT WAS
ONE-NIGHT
STANDS...



... A BUNCH
OF WHORES WHO
DIDN'T GIVE A DAMN
ABOUT YOU THE
NEXT DAY.

THAT'S ALL
YOU'VE GOT!
ALL YOU'LL EVER
HAVE!



WELL,
I CAN
FIX
THAT.

YOU STOLE
EVERYTHING
I CHERISHED!
EVERYTHING
I LOVED!

TIME I
EVENED THE
SCORE!

EIGHT HOURS LATER...

HERE'S
YOUR
TRACKING
DEVICE. IT
WORKS
FINE NOW.

YOUR
PALS
SHOULD
FIND YOU
SOME-
TIME.

I WANT
TO SEE HOW
TOUGH YOU
REALLY ARE...
IF YOU CAN
KEEP THIS WAR
ON A PERSONAL
LEVEL?

CHAPEL!

YOU
OKAY?!

HEY, MAN,
WHAT
HAPPE—

JEEZ!

BADROCK,
GET THE
FIRST AID--
NOW!

HE
NEEDS
HELP!

CHAPEL--
WHAT'S UP?!

WHERE'S
THAT
CAPED
GUY?

HOW'D YOU GET HERE?

WHAT'D HE
WANT? WHAT'D
HE SAY?!



Nothing.

NEXT: THE *RETURN* OF THE
VIOLATOR!





image

14
SEP

DIGITAL
EDITION

SPAWN[®]



HA!!

THAT'S
THE BEST
YOU CAN DO
?!

WELL,
SIT BACK
AND I'LL TELL
YOU ABOUT
"TOUGH!"

I USED TO WORK FOR A DUDE
WHO WAS SO MEAN HE'D MAKE YOU
PUKE! YOU KNOW THE KIND--
SO **SICK** THEY MAKE **YOU** SICK!

→ Sigh. ← WELL, THE DUDE COULDN'T BE
EVERYWHERE AT ONCE, SO HE'D
CALL FOR HELP ON THE REALLY **ROUGH**
ASSIGNMENTS. ONLY THE
BADDEST, MEANEST, TOUGHEST, ROTTENEST
EMPLOYEE WOULD GET THE CALL...

AND IT WAS **ALWAYS** THE **SAME GUY** WHO'D GET THE CALL...

A GUY WHO'D MAKE **SCHWARZENEGGER,**
STALLONE AND **VAN DAMME** LOOK
LIKE THE **THREE**
STOOGES.

AND **GUESS**
WHO THAT
TOUGH-AS-NAILS
WORKER
WAS?!

I'LL HELP YOU OUT.

IT WAS **I!**...
HUMBLE LITTLE 'OL'

VIOLATOR!



GIMME
A BREAK.

PLEASE
...

...SAVE THE
APPLAUSE
TILL THE
END.

FEED US
ANOTHER
LINE, YOU
FAT LITTLE
LOSER!

HA! HO!

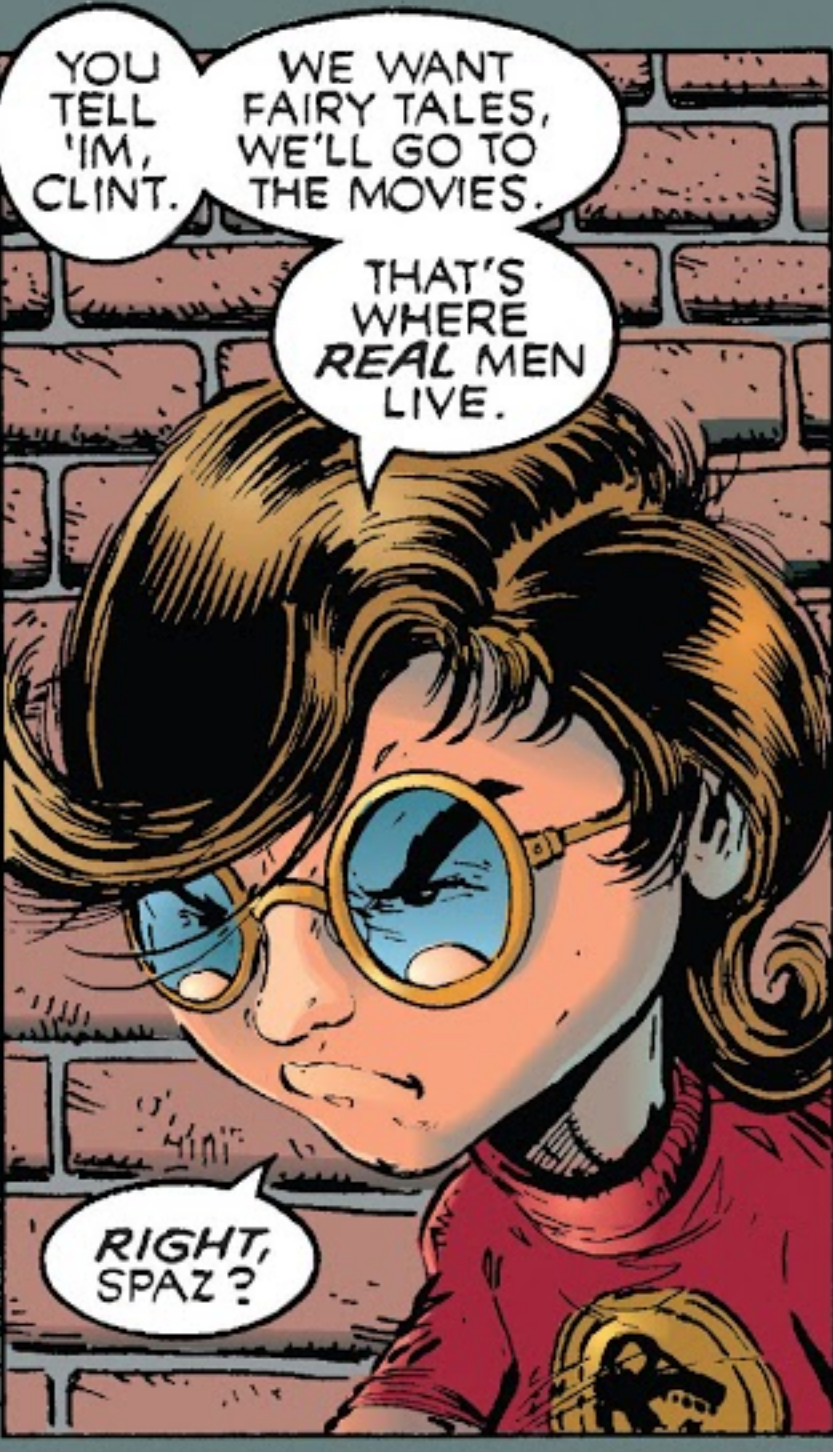
SURELY
YOU'RE PULLING
MY LEG.

YOU WOULDN'T
BE SO *INSOLENT* IF
YOU KNEW OF THE
LEGEND YOU NOW FACE.
I'M PART OF HISTORY,
KIDS. *THOUSANDS* OF
TALES TELL OF MY PROWESS.
BUT! ...NONE HAVE
GOTTEN IT QUITE
RIGHT.



TONIGHT,
I'LL GRACIOUSLY
HONOR YOU
WITH THE
TRUTH!

LISTEN,
OLD MAN,
WE AIN'T
GOT *TIME* FOR
THIS KIND'A
CRAP.



YOU
TELL
'IM,
CLINT.

WE WANT
FAIRY TALES,
WE'LL GO TO
THE MOVIES.

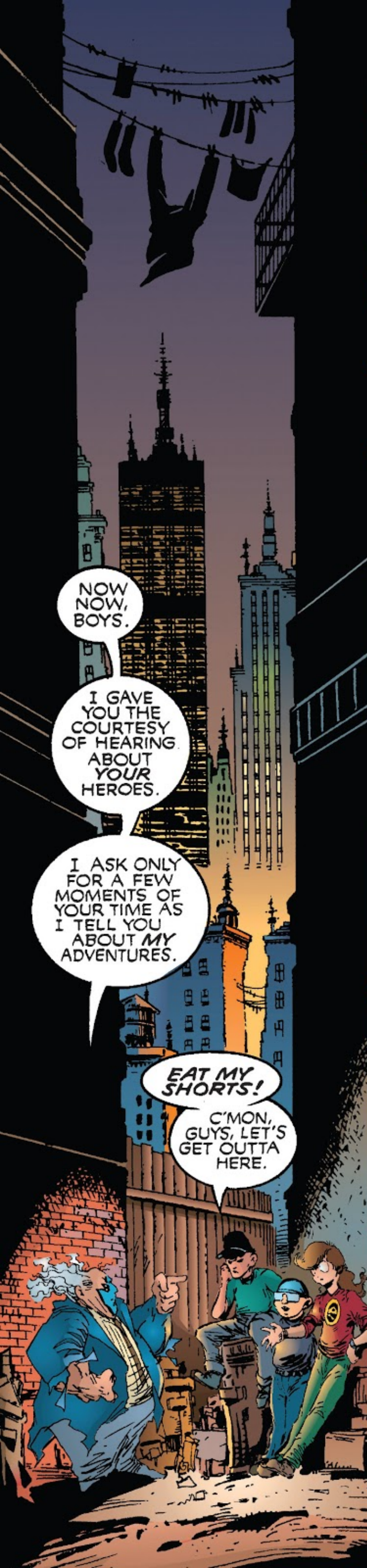
THAT'S
WHERE
REAL MEN
LIVE.

RIGHT,
SPAZ?



I'M WITH
YA, MARK.
LET'S BLOW
OUTTA
HERE.

THIS
DUDE'S
WASTIN' MY
TIME.



NOW
NOW,
BOYS.

I GAVE
YOU THE
COURTESY
OF HEARING
ABOUT
YOUR
HEROES.

I ASK ONLY
FOR A FEW
MOMENTS OF
YOUR TIME AS
I TELL YOU
ABOUT MY
ADVENTURES.

EAT MY
SHORTS!

C'MON,
GUYS, LET'S
GET OUTTA
HERE.



WHY, YOU
LITTLE
PUNKS!

NO TIME
FOR ANYONE
BUT
YOUR-
SELVES!

YOU
KNOW, I
SHOULD KILL
THE WHOLE
LOT OF
YOU.



BUT...

I KINDA
ADMIRE
YOUR
PUSSY
ATTI-
TUDE.

REMINDS
ME OF
MYSELF.



SO I'LL **BUY** YA
IF I HAFFTA.



Wow!

AWESOME!

IS THIS
ALL?

SHUT UP,
SPAZ.

OKAY,
OLD MAN.
WE'RE ALL
EARS.

IS THIS
COUNTERFEIT?



SILENCE!

MY TALE
BEGINS.

OVER 800 YEARS
AGO THERE LIVED
AN EVIL WIZARD.
HIS *SOUL* WAS AS
DARK AS COAL. THE
INHABITANTS OF THE
SURROUNDING LANDS
FEARED HIS VERY
PRESENCE.

THE EVIL WIZARD,
HAD, AFTER ALL,
GUTTED MANY
INNOCENT FOLKS.

MEN, WOMEN,
EVEN BABIES.
FEW WERE IMMUNE
TO HIS BARBARIC
WAYS. PERMANENT
STAINS OF *BLOOD*
ETCHED ACROSS HIS
BATTLE GEAR.

HE KEPT THE PEOPLE
IN CHECK BY USING
THE STRONGEST FORCE
ON EARTH...

"MONEY!"

NO, BOY-- *FEAR*.



WHEREVER HE WENT,
THE CITIZENS FLED.
THOSE LEFT BEHIND
COVERED IN HIS SHADOW.

THIS ISOLATION
DROVE HIM MAD.

RIDING ON THE BACK OF HIS BLACK DEMONIC MONSTER, HE INSPIRED OFT-REPEATED STORIES. ONE TOLD OF MEN TRAMPLED, A HUNDRED AT A TIME, JUST SO HE COULD LAUGH AT THEIR BLOOD-CURDLING SCREAMS. CHAOS REIGNED SUPREME. IT WAS SAID THAT HE DERIVED GREAT PLEASURE AS WELL FROM WATCHING OTHERS DO BATTLE-- HIS TWISTED WAY OF UNWINDING. ONE SUCH INCIDENT BROUGHT THE REGION'S RULER OF THAT TIME, KING JOHN IV, INTO CONFLICT WITH A NEIGHBORING TERRITORY.



NO HARM
SHALL COME
TO THIS TOWN...
NOT WHILE
I LIVE!

WHILE THE
TWO ARMIES
STRUGGLED, THE
DARK WIZARD
STOOD IDLY BY,
WATCHING
GLEEFULLY AS
THE RAPING AND
PILLAGING OF
EACH TOWN GREW
MORE FRENZIED.

HE SEEMED TO
TAKE PRIDE
IN HIS APATHY.

THE PEOPLE GREW TO
HATE HIM MORE AND
MORE AS HE STOOD BY
DOING NOTHING.



SO WHY
DIDN'T
SOMEBODY
ACE
HIM?

THAT'S
EASY.

THEY
WERE ALL
CHICKEN!

NO ONE
HAD THE
GUTS
TO STAND UP
TO HIM.



WRONG!

MY BOSS
HAND-PICKED
ME TO GO
TAKE HIM
OUT.

"YOU'RE 800
YEARS OLD...?!
OH PLEASE SPARE ME!"

"QUIET, CLINT.
I WANT TO
HEAR THIS."



I ACCEPTED MY
ASSIGNMENT
WITHOUT
HESITATION.

THE PEOPLE OF
THE VILLAGE
WELCOMED ME
INTO THEIR HOMES.
THESE WILLING
TOWNSFOLK ALL
OPENED THEIR
HEARTS TO ME.

EVERY
LAST
ONE.



THE NIGHT
I ARRIVED
WE ATE LIKE
KINGS.

IT WAS A FEAST
THE LIKES OF
WHICH HAD NEVER
BEEN SEEN.

THEIR HERO
HAD **FINALLY**
ARRIVED.



WORD OF MY PRESENCE SPREAD QUICKLY. I SOON VISITED THE SURROUNDING VILLAGES.



I WANTED TO ASSURE THEM ALL PERSONALLY THAT I WAS NOW THEIR SWORN PROTECTOR.

THEY NEEDED NO LONGER FEAR THE EVIL SPAWN-WIZARD.



NOT WHILE I WAS AROUND.



A FEW DAYS LATER, I HEARD OF A MAN WHO HAD BEEN BEATEN BY THE WIZARD, AND YET LIVED.

MORE IMPORTANTLY, HE KNEW WHERE THE WIZARD WAS HEADED. I DID NOT HESITATE TO VISIT THIS POOR, COURAGEOUS MAN.



AFTER GATHERING THE INFORMATION I NEEDED, I MADE SURE THAT HIS WOUNDS WERE PROPERLY TAKEN CARE OF.



ARMED WITH KNOWLEDGE OF HIS WHEREABOUTS, I CAREFULLY MAPPED OUT MY STRATEGIES ON HOW BEST TO ENCOUNTER THIS WICKED NEMESIS.

RUSHING INTO BATTLE WOULD ONLY WEAKEN MY POSITION.

I NEEDED TO STRENGTHEN MYSELF.

HONE MY ABILITIES.

EVERY VILLAGE MADE SURE I WOULD BE WELL-PROVIDED FOR. I HAD THEIR COMPLETE CO-OPERATION IN MY TASK OF FINALLY RIDDING THEIR LANDS OF THIS DARK HELLSPAWN.

THEY GAVE ME EVERYTHING I COULD POSSIBLY NEED.

FINALLY, I WAS READY.

ALL I NEEDED NOW WAS A **DECOY**... SOMEONE THAT EVEN THE MOST **DISGUSTING** OF HUMAN BEINGS ACTUALLY CARED FOR.

AND I FOUND HER.

...THE WIZARD'S VERY OWN EVIL, **UGLY, WART-FACED, WICKED WITCH** MOTHER.

HOLD IT RIGHT THERE.

LET ME GET THIS STRAIGHT. YOU'RE 800 YEARS OLD. YOU USED TO BE A **LEAN-MEAN-FIGHTIN'-MACHINE**. AND YOU FOUGHT **WIZARDS 'N' WITCHES**?

SO!

EXACTLY WHO IS THIS **BOSS OF YOURS**?! HE'S GOTTA BE PRETTY POWERFUL HIMSELF TO KEEP YOU **ALIVE** AFTER ALL THESE YEARS.

SURELY YOU'VE ALL READ THE **BIBLE**.

WHOA!

YOU MEAN YOU'RE ONE OF GOD'S DISCIPLES?!

PLEASE!! GET WITH THE PROGRAM.

HERE'S A CLUE.

RECALL THE **OTHER** DIRECTION.

NEW YORK CITY'S POLICE DEPARTMENT, 121st PRECINCT...

...SPECIFICALLY, THE OFFICE OF DETECTIVES SAM BURKE AND "TWITCH" WILLIAMS.

HELL I FEEL GOOD!

I HOPE CHIEF BANKS IS DYING OF AN ULCER!

WE **SHOVED** IT RIGHT UP HIS REAR!

GOD BLESS AMERICA!

P-PLEASE, SIR--!

WATCH THE RIBS.

THEY'VE JUST GOTTEN WORD THAT THEY ARE OFFICIALLY CLEARED OF ANY WRONGDOING, FOLLOWING AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE DEATH OF CHILDKILLER BILLY KINCAID.

THE PAIR CAN NOW RESUME THEIR REGULAR DUTIES ON THE STREETS WITHOUT FURTHER DELAY. TWO WEEKS STRAPPED BEHIND A DESK DROVE SAM ALMOST COMPLETELY BONKERS.

hee-hee-hee!

I LOVE WINNING!

WELL, TWITCH, YOU KNOW WHAT I'M GOING TO DO **FIRST**, uh?

YES, SIR.

FIND OUR HERO IN THE RED CAPE.

BINGO!

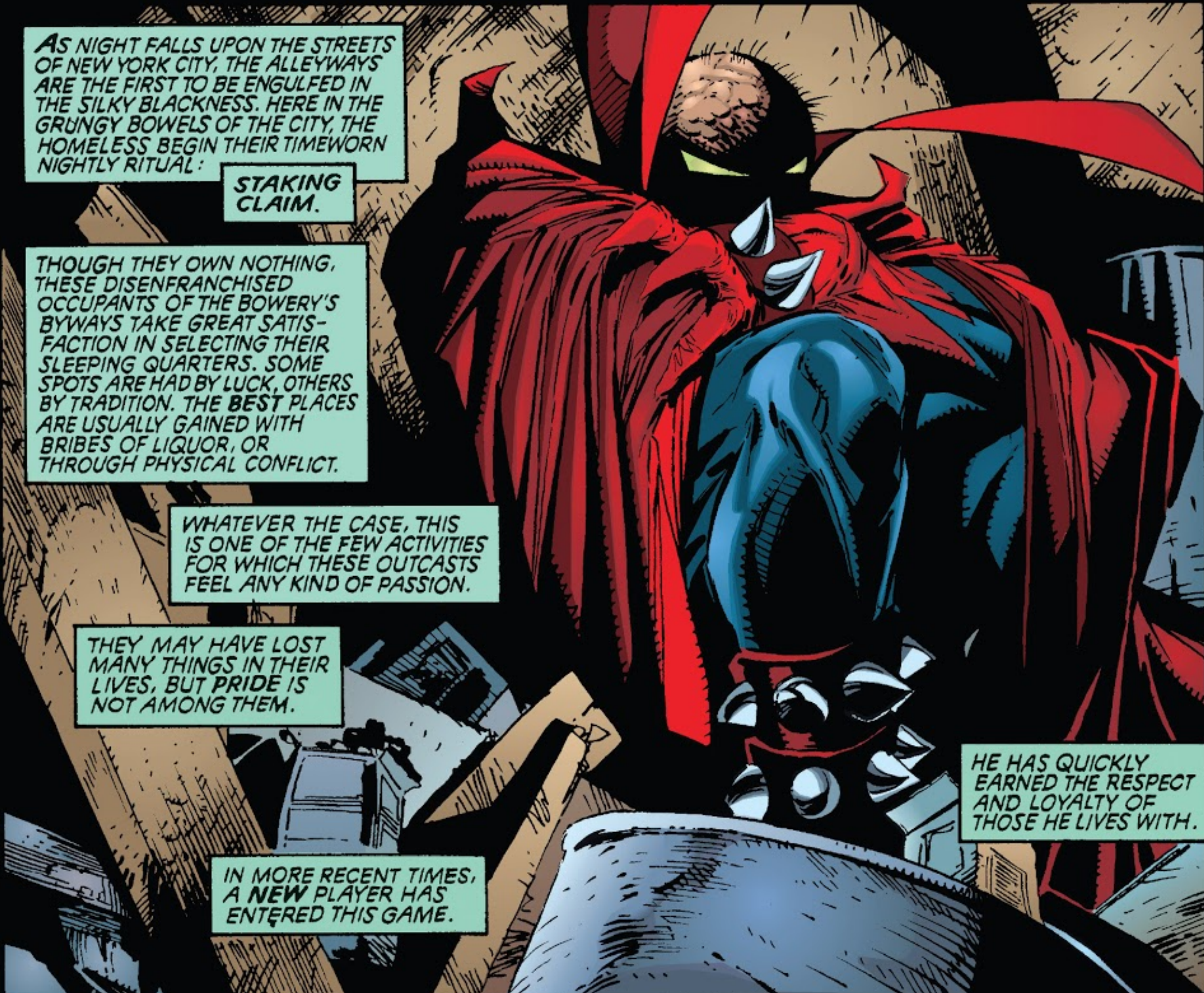
THE INVESTIGATING BOARD DIDN'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT HIM. WITH US CLEARED, THEY'RE ANTSY TO FIND OUT WHAT **REALLY** HAPPENED.

MAYBE WE CAN HELP THEM OUT A BIT.

YES, SIR.

MAY I SUGGEST WE START IMMEDIATELY. I COULD USE A LITTLE OVERTIME.

BY THE WAY, SIR, YOU HAVE A DONUT SQUISHED TO YOUR ASS.



AS NIGHT FALLS UPON THE STREETS OF NEW YORK CITY, THE ALLEYWAYS ARE THE FIRST TO BE ENGULFED IN THE SILKY BLACKNESS. HERE IN THE GRUNGY BOWELS OF THE CITY, THE HOMELESS BEGIN THEIR TIMEWORN NIGHTLY RITUAL:

STAKING CLAIM.

THOUGH THEY OWN NOTHING, THESE DISENFRANCHISED OCCUPANTS OF THE BOWERY'S BYWAYS TAKE GREAT SATISFACTION IN SELECTING THEIR SLEEPING QUARTERS. SOME SPOTS ARE HAD BY LUCK, OTHERS BY TRADITION. THE BEST PLACES ARE USUALLY GAINED WITH BRIBES OF LIQUOR, OR THROUGH PHYSICAL CONFLICT.

WHATEVER THE CASE, THIS IS ONE OF THE FEW ACTIVITIES FOR WHICH THESE OUTCASTS FEEL ANY KIND OF PASSION.

THEY MAY HAVE LOST MANY THINGS IN THEIR LIVES, BUT PRIDE IS NOT AMONG THEM.

IN MORE RECENT TIMES, A NEW PLAYER HAS ENTERED THIS GAME.

HE HAS QUICKLY EARNED THE RESPECT AND LOYALTY OF THOSE HE LIVES WITH.



THOUGH IT TOOK HIM NEARLY EIGHT DAYS TO RETURN FROM AFRICA, HIS CHOICE OF RESTING PLACES IS UNDISPUTED. THE PECKING ORDER ENDURES.

SHELTERED AWAY IN HIS NEW RESTING SPOT, SPAWN CAN REFLECT CALMLY ON HIS ACTIONS, CONSIDERING WHAT WENT WRONG, AND WHY.

ANOTHER SLEEPLESS NIGHT. IT'S BECOMING PREDICTABLE.



HOW COULD I BE SO STUPID.



I'VE
LET ANGER
DICTATE MY
ACTIONS.

BUT IF CHAPEL TALKS,
I'M SCREWED. BIG TIME.

AT LEAST I'VE HAD MY REVENGE
BY BRANDING HIS FACE WITH
THAT STUPID SKULL MARK
PERMANENTLY. EVEN MAKE-
UP WON'T STICK TO IT. HE'S A
WALKING HORROR SHOW.

GOOD. I DIDN'T
WANT TO BE THE
ONLY ONE.

WHAT NOW?

CHAPEL NOW KNOWS I'M
ALIVE. UP TILL NOW MY
GREATEST ADVANTAGE WAS
MY DEATH. NO MATTER
WHAT I DID, I WAS CLEAN.
NO ONE WOULD THINK
THAT A DEAD MAN WAS
RESPONSIBLE. THEY'VE
BEEN CHASING SHADOWS
AND RED HERRINGS.

DO I SIT AROUND WAITING
TO SEE IF HE OPENS HIS BIG
MOUTH? FORGET IT. TIME'S
STILL ON MY SIDE.

IT'D STILL TAKE A
COUPLE OF MONTHS
FOR ANYONE TO
TRACK ME DOWN.

I'LL JUST HAVE TO
CROSS THAT BRIDGE
WHEN I GET TO IT.



TAKE THE NEXT LEFT, TWITCH. CONNORS SAID THERE'S USUALLY A HIGH DENSITY OF THEM DOWN THAT BACK WAY!

YES, SIR.

I'VE HEARD OUR CAPED VIGILANTE MIGHT BE INVOLVED IN OTHER SLAYINGS.

HOW DO WE KNOW HE'S NOT INVOLVED WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S **YOUNGBLOOD** PROGRAM?



WE DON'T!

BUT EVEN IF HE IS, THEY DON'T GIVE PRIVILEGES SUCH AS **MANSLAUGHTER** TO THEIR AGENTS.

WE'VE GOT OURSELVES A PURE AND SIMPLE **WACKO**.

THAT I'LL AGREE WITH, SIR.



GOOD!

NOW LET'S GET GOING. CHANCES ARE, OUR LITTLE HERO'S SPLIT TOWN. IF HE WAS SMART, THAT IS.

BUT I'VE BEEN ONE TO GIVE CRIMINALS ABNORMALLY HIGH I.Q.'S!



WELL, LOOKY WHAT WE'VE GOT HERE. A REGULAR CONVENTION OR SOMETHING. TWITCH, THIS MIGHT JUST BE OUR **LUCKY** DAY.

IT'S NIGHT, SIR.



'EVENING, FELLOWS.

WHOOPEE! IT'S THE FUZZ.

"FUZZ"? SORRY TO BREAK IT TO YOU, BUT THAT TERM WENT OUT FIFTEEN YEARS AGO... THOUGH I DON'T SUPPOSE YOUR STEADY DIET OF **DRUGS** AND **BOOZE** HAS MADE YOU ANY KIND OF EINSTEIN.

PLEASE, SIR. LET'S BE PLEASANT ABOUT THIS.

YOU'RE RIGHT.

GENTLEMEN... MAY I HAVE YOUR ATTENTION PLEASE!

"I SWEAR, THIS GUY
LEADS A *CHARMED* LIFE."



AL SIMMONS WOULD
CONSIDER THAT TO
BE A VERY, VERY
BAD JOKE.



SO ANYWAYS,
IT WAS TIME FOR
ME TO HUNT DOWN
THE WICKED
WITCH!



SHE WAS 100% EVIL.
THE VERY SIGHT OF HER WOULD
MAKE YOU SCREAM. FANGS
GREW FROM HER BLACK LIPS.
PIERCING RED EYES SANK
INTO A FACE SPLATTERED
WITH WARTS AND CUTS.

HIDEOUS DOESN'T
BEGIN TO
DESCRIBE HER.

AND, SHE
WAS
POWERFUL
BEYOND BELIEF.

SHE COULD CONTROL THE WIND
AND THE RAIN. EVEN THE
CREATURES OF THE FOREST
LISTENED TO HER COMMANDS.

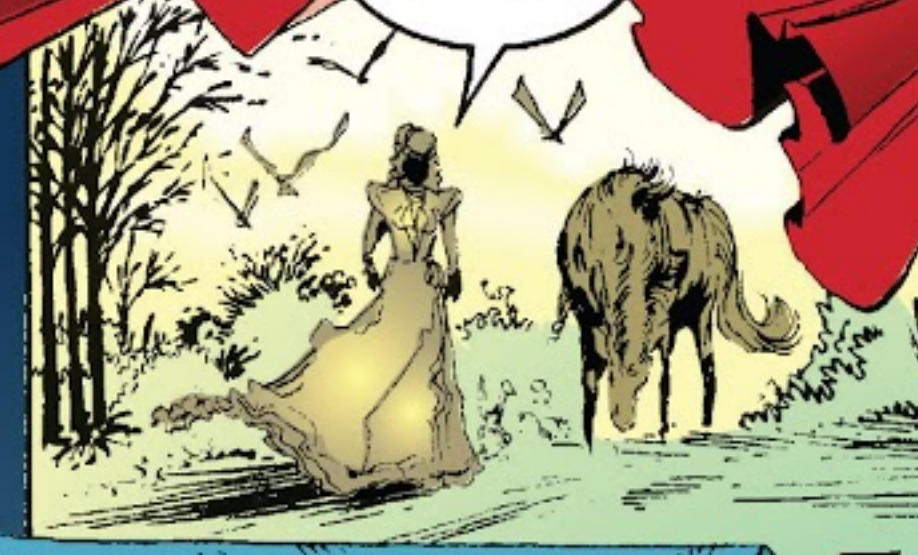
AND HOW SHE LOVED HER SON.



I'LL
AWAIT YOUR
RETURN, MY
PRINCE.

I SHALL
COME BACK
IN HASTE.

KEEP THEE
WELL DURING
MY ABSENCE,
SWEET
DARLING.



IF I COULD ONLY FIND AND
CAPTURE THIS COLD, SADISTIC
WOMAN, I MIGHT HAVE A CHANCE
OF KILLING THE SPAWN-WIZARD
HIMSELF.

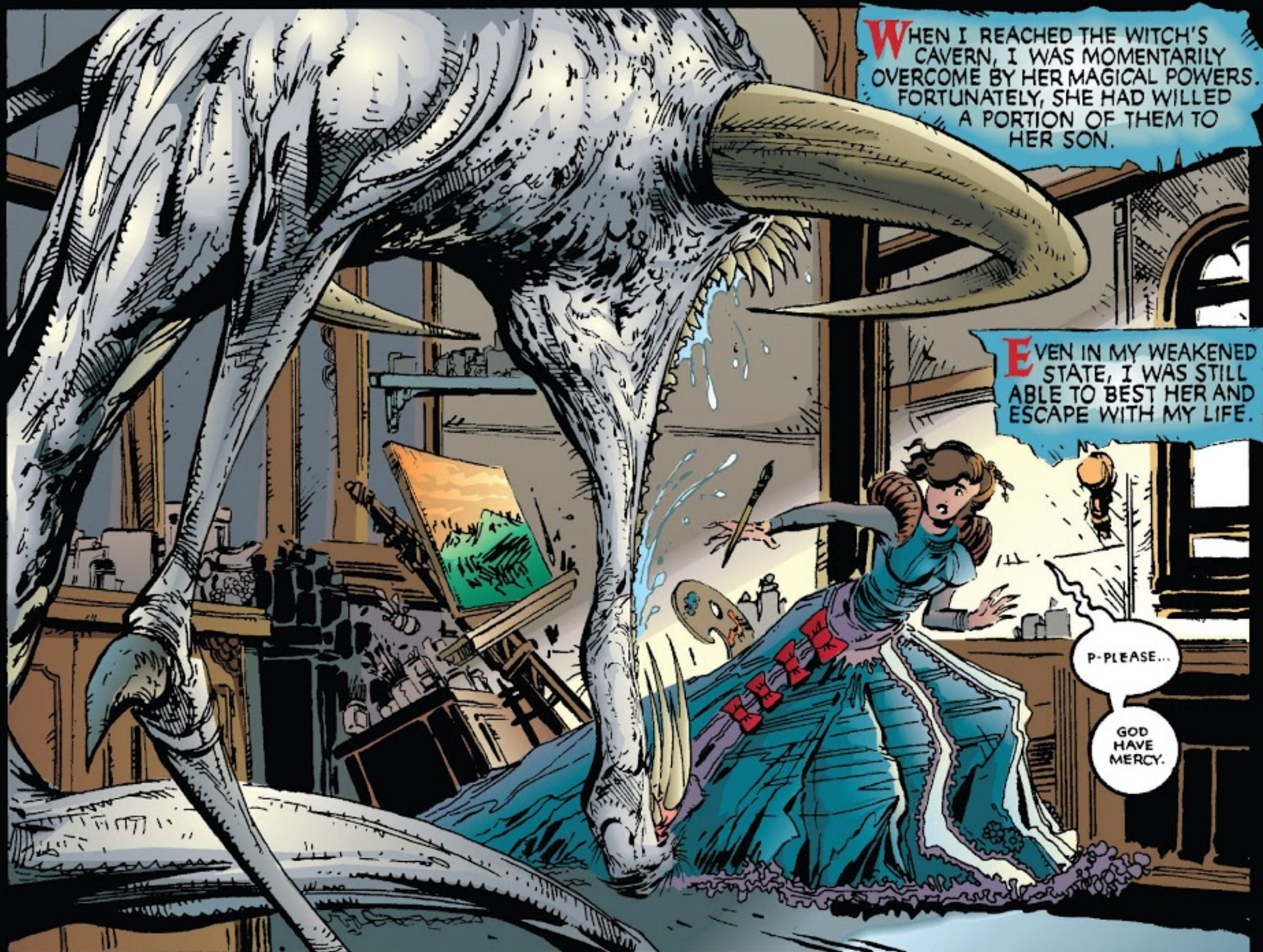


SHE WOULD
BE MY
DECOY.



IT TOOK THREE DAYS' TRAVEL
TO REACH HER CASTLE. AT
HER DOORWAY I FOUGHT
TWENTY OR MORE MONSTERS
WHICH BARRED MY PATH.

I WON, BUT
JUST
BARELY.



WHEN I REACHED THE WITCH'S CAVERN, I WAS MOMENTARILY OVERCOME BY HER MAGICAL POWERS. FORTUNATELY, SHE HAD WILLED A PORTION OF THEM TO HER SON.

EVEN IN MY WEAKENED STATE, I WAS STILL ABLE TO BEST HER AND ESCAPE WITH MY LIFE.

P-PLEASE...

GOD HAVE MERCY.



THIS LEGENDARY FIGHT HAS BEEN ACCLAIMED OVER THE GENERATIONS AS THE TURNING POINT IN MY CRUSADE TO KILL THE SPAWN-WIZARD.

IT TOOK DAYS, BUT FINALLY I DETERMINED THE WHEREABOUTS OF HER SON.



EVEN IN CAPTIVITY, SHE FOUGHT, NEVER GIVING UP. IN SOME TWISTED WAY, I ALMOST ADMIRER HER STAMINA. I HAD SEEN THOUSANDS OF MEN WHO FOUGHT LESS GALLANTLY.

WHEN AT LAST SHE SUCCUMBED, I TOOK HER WITH ME AS I SET OFF AFTER HER SON.

THE TIME HAD COME TO FACE THE BLACK WIZARD.

A BRAVE MESSENGER DELIVERED A NOTE TO THE HELLSPAWN, TELLING OF HIS MOTHER'S CAPTURE. THE LETTER SPOKE OF A "CHALLENGE."

A FIGHT TO THE DEATH.

WINNER-TAKE-ALL.

THE SPAWN-WIZARD ACCEPTED, 'CAUSE, TO TELL THE TRUTH, HE WAS A BIG MOMMA'S BOY. HE COULDN'T STAND TO SEE HIS MOTHER IN THE HANDS OF THE ENEMY.

SO WE MET.

FACE TO FACE. MAN TO MAN.

WHAT TOOK PLACE THAT NIGHT IS THE REASON THE WORD "HEROIC" EXISTS IN THE DICTIONARY TODAY.

YOU... COWARD...

... HIDING BEHIND THIS WOMAN'S SKIRTS.

I SHALL KILL YOU!

HE TREMBLED AT MY VERY PRESENCE.

I TOLD HIM I WOULD NOT LEAVE BEFORE COLLECTING THE HEADS FROM HIM AND HIS MOTHER, FOR MY TROPHY-CASE.

THIS, OBVIOUSLY, DIDN'T SIT VERY WELL WITH HIM.

HE TRIED TO REACH HIS MOTHER, BUT I BLOCKED THE WAY.



SO BEGAN
OUR HISTORIC
BATTLE.

GOOD VERSUS EVIL. TO THE DEATH. HIS STRENGTH AND AGILITY SURPRISED ME AT FIRST, BUT I HAD TO REMAIN FOCUSED. ANY DISTRACTION COULD COST ME MY LIFE! I HAD TO FIGHT WITH ALL MY SENSES ACTING AS ONE.

OUR WAR RAGED ON FOR WHAT SEEMED LIKE AN ETERNITY. THE VERY GROUND SHOOK WITH OUR EVERY MOVE.



DO YOU EVER
STOP?!

HOWEVER, I COULD DETECT EXHAUSTION CREEPING UNBIDDEN INTO THE SPAWN'S SWORD ARM.

HE BACKED ME UP AGAINST A TREE LINE, HOPING I WOULD TRY TO FLEE. THEN, WITH ALL THE DARKNESS THAT HID THE FOREST AS HIS EXCUSE, HE COULD SAY HE LOST ME IN THE SHADOWS.

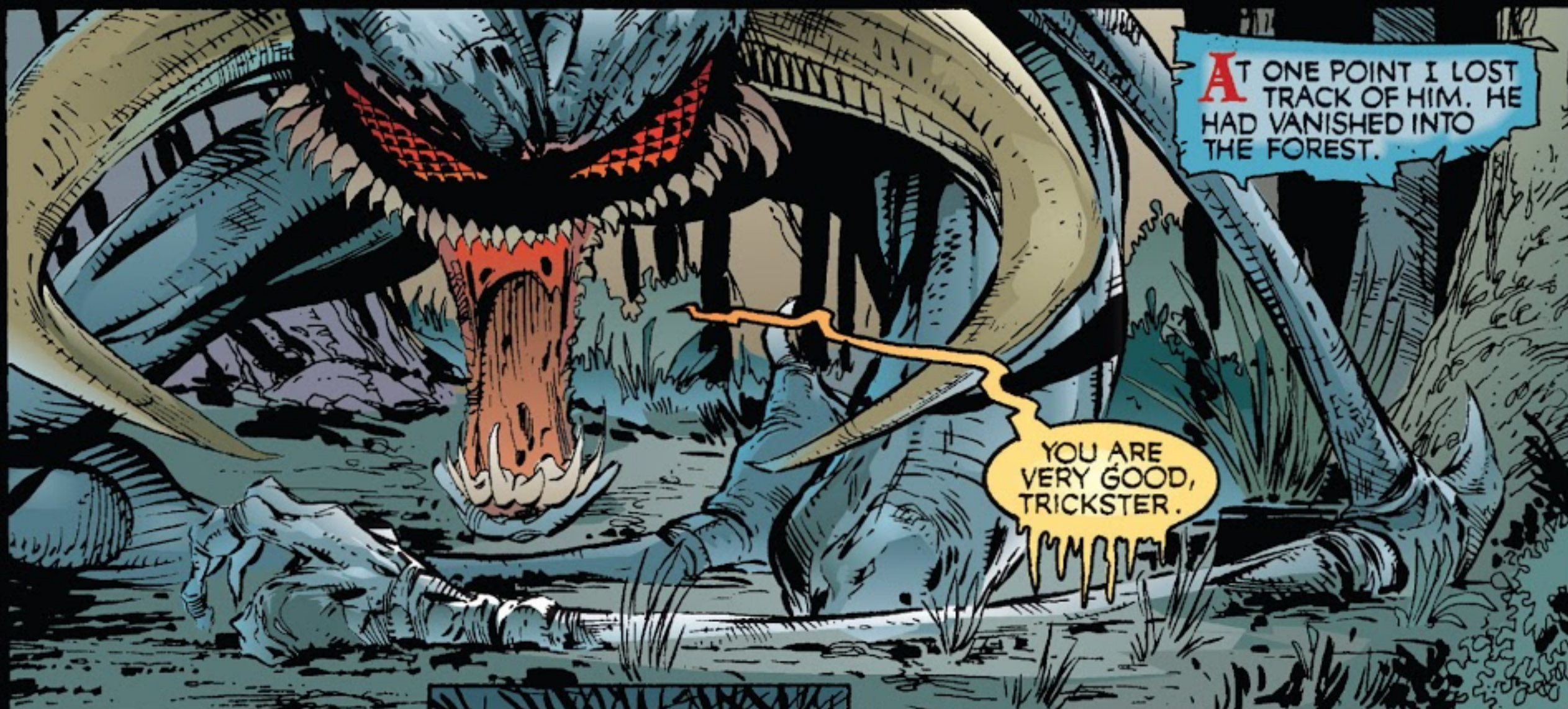
OBVIOUSLY, HE GROSSLY UNDERESTIMATED MY GRIT AND DETERMINATION.

QUICKLY, I MADE MY MOVE.



THE FIERCENESS OF MY ATTACK CAUGHT HIM COMPLETELY OFF-GUARD.

I HAD HIM ON THE ROPES!!



AT ONE POINT I LOST TRACK OF HIM. HE HAD VANISHED INTO THE FOREST.

YOU ARE VERY GOOD, TRICKSTER.



NOW SHOW YOURSELF!

I TIRE OF THIS GAME.



WHEN I SAW THAT HIS WICKED MOTHER WAS TIED TO THE TREE, I KNEW HE'D HAVE TO RETURN.

I SAID--
STEP INTO THE MOONLIGHT,
YOU SPINELESS WHELP!!

SO I WAITED CALMLY.



STRIKE NOW, DEMON.

I TURNED AT THE SOUND OF HIS MUFFLED VOICE. HE STOOD BY A GREAT OAK, ALMOST DEFYING ME TO REACT.

WELL, I DIDN'T WANT TO DISAPPOINT THE LITTLE PUS-HEAD.

BESIDES, HE HAD IT COMING.

MUSTERING ALL THE STRENGTH I HAD LEFT, I DIRECTED EVERYTHING INTO ONE LAST FIERY BLOW.

I BARFED A MAELSTROM OF ACIDIC FLAMES FULL OF FORCE INTO MY HATED ENEMY.

WITHOUT MOVING A MUSCLE, HE CAUGHT THE FULL ONSLAUGHT OF MY BLAST. AS I CONTINUED TO VOMIT DEATH, I COULD ONLY LAUGH INSIDE. THE WICKED WITCH WAS LEFT TO WATCH, HORRIFIED, AS I FRENCH-FRIED OL' SONNY BOY.

MY PRINCE ...

Noooo!

TEN MINUTES AFTER I STOPPED, HIS ARMOR STILL GLOWED RED-HOT. WHEN IT COOLED, FINALLY, I CHECKED INSIDE... AND DO YOU KNOW WHAT I FOUND?

BEVIS AND BUTTHEAD!

HA-HA! GOOD ONE, MARK!

MAYBE IT WAS JUST A VERY TANNED WIZARD.

YEAH-- OR MAYBE A BIG PILE OF CRAP!

WHO CARES. C'MON, GUYS, LET'S GET OUTTA HERE.

BUT... BUT... BOYS-- THIS IS THE CLIMAX!

I'M ALMOST DONE... JUST A FEW MORE MINUTES...

...oh, OKAY...

HERE'S ANOTHER FIVE BUCKS EACH. YOU HAPPY?!

BEAUTY!

ALRIGHT. WHAT DID YOU FIND?

DIDDLY!

I HAD COMPLETELY
DISINTEGRATED
THE POOR SUCKER!

HA-HA-HA-HA!

HAHAHAHAHA

NEXT
ISSUE THE CONCLUSION-- AND
A NEW LEGEND IS BORN!
(HONEST-- I WOULDN'T LIE.)



image

15
NOV | DIGITAL
EDITION

SPAWN



M'FARLANE
019 C

BANISHED BY THE DEVIL TO A LIFE ON EARTH IN HUMAN FORM, **THE VIOLATOR** IS AT A LOSS FOR WHAT TO DO NEXT. FACED WITH UNACCUSTOMED SILENCE FROM DOWN BELOW, HE'S BIDDING HIS TIME UNTIL HE CAN FIGURE A WAY TO GET BACK HIS LOST POWERS.

NORMALLY A MISSHAPEN EMBODIMENT OF HORROR--WITH PROTRUDING HORNS AND TALONS--HE IS NOW STUCK IN A THREE-FOOT-TEN-INCHE BODY, LOOKING LIKE A MINIATURE SUMO WRESTLER GONE TO SEED... **BAD SEED**. HE IS THE VICTIM OF HIS OWN FAILURE TO FULFILL HIS MASTER'S WISHES. *

ON HIS LAST MISSION, THE VIOLATOR'S ORDERS WERE TO PROVOKE THE NEWLY-ARRIVED **SPAWN** TO EXPERIMENT WITH ITS POWERS. INSTEAD OF STAGING A DIRECT ATTACK, THE VIOLATOR DECIDED TO DRAW THE SPAWN OUT BY GOING ON A KILLING SPREE. BY DISMEMBERING SOME OF NEW YORK'S **TOP MAFIA DONS**, THE VIOLATOR HOPED TO ATTRACT THE MOB AND THE POLICE INTO A TWO-PRONGED ATTACK AGAINST SPAWN, THE NEW, POWERFUL, COSTUMED PLAYER IN THE AREA.

INSTEAD, THE VIOLATOR ONLY COMPLICATED MATTERS. AFTER ALL, THERE WAS NOTHING TO LINK SPAWN WITH THE WEIRDLY BRUTAL KILLINGS. IN FACT, THAT SENSELESS ASSAULT CAUSED THE CRIME CARTEL TO BECOME CAUTIOUS FOR A WHILE. CRIME ACTUALLY WENT **DOWN** A FEW PERCENTAGE POINTS. FROM THE DEVIL'S POINT OF VIEW, THIS WAS **UNACCEPTABLE**. FOR HELL TO PROSPER, EVIL MUST GAIN NEW GROUND, AND THE VIOLATOR WAS TO BLAME FOR THIS SORRY STATE OF DECLINE. AS A PUNISHMENT, THE VIOLATOR HAS LOST ACCESS TO HIS MONSTROUS, MORE POWERFUL FORM.

OUR ROTUND VIOLATOR, THE WORLD-CLASS IDIOT, SIMPLY **DIDN'T GET IT**. FIGURING THAT HE'S MERELY BEEN **REPLACED** BY THE NEW HELLSPAWN, HE DECIDED TO TAKE A REASONED APPROACH AND BUILD SOME SUPPORT AT THE GRASS ROOTS. IF HE CAN IMPRESS THE YOUNG WITH HIS MAGNIFICENT SKILLS AND DEVIL-MAY-CARE PHILOSOPHY, HIS MASTER MAY LOOK KINDLY UPON THE EVENTUAL, DISEASED RESULTS OF HIS INFLUENCE.

CLINT, MARK AND SPAZ, THREE CITIZENS OF THE STREETS, HAVE BEEN DRAFTED AS OBSERVERS FOR HIS **ONE-MAN BATTLE OF WITS**.

HE'S BEEN TELLING THEM OF A CAMPAIGN AGAINST **ANOTHER SPAWN**, FOUGHT NEARLY **800 YEARS AGO**. THIS TALE, WE ARE QUICK TO POINT OUT, INVOLVES TWO VICTIMS: THE **SPAWN**, AND THE **FACTS**.

THE VIOLATOR
CLEARS HIS THROAT,
SPITS IMPRESSIVELY,
AND CONTINUES...

YOU HEARD
ME!!

I COMPLETELY
FLAME-BROILED
THE LITTLE
BOOGER!

Ahhh...

SO NOW
YOU'RE A
FIRE-BREATHER
AS WELL AS AN
800-YEAR-OLD
FIGHTING
STUD.

EXACTLY!

AND
FORTUNATELY
FOR YOU BOYS,
THERE'S **MORE**
TO MY TALE OF
BRAVERY!

AS
I WAS **SAYING**,
SINCE THE DAYLIGHT
WAS GONE, I NEEDED
TO **POKE AROUND** TO
MAKE SURE THAT
MY FOE WAS...
IN ACTUALITY...
DEAD.

I SCoured the
CHARRED REMAINS
FOR VERIFICATION.
THE SPAWN-WIZARD
WAS A VERY CRAFTY
INDIVIDUAL, SO I
DIDN'T WANT TO MAKE
ANY MISTAKES.

THE BOSS
USUALLY
LIKED PROOF.
HE'S ALWAYS
BEEN PICKY
LIKE THAT.

SINCE I COULDN'T FIND ANY OF
THE SPAWN'S REMAINS, MY
PROOF WOULD HAVE TO BE
FOUND ELSEWHERE.

YOUR
BOYFRIEND
IS **FINISHED**,
DEAR MAIDEN.

I HOPE
YOU DON'T
MIND IF I
ASK YOU TO
JOIN HIM.

IF I BROUGHT THE BOSS THE HEAD OF SPAWN'S WICKED MOTHER, THAT WOULD BE MY EVIDENCE. ONLY IF THE SPAWN WERE TRULY DEAD WOULD I HAVE BEEN ALLOWED TO DECAPITATE THE WITCH HERSELF.

YOUR GOD IS MY ENEMY.

SO BEG ALL YOU WANT.

please...

I HOPE HE'S LISTENING.

BECAUSE OF ALL THE PAIN SHE AND HER OFFSPRING HAD BROUGHT TO THE NEIGHBORING LANDS, I WANTED TO MAKE SURE THAT SHE DIED SLOWLY. I WANTED HER TO SUFFER LIKE ALL THOSE INNOCENT VICTIMS HER SON TORTURED.

SO I BEGAN TO CUT HER. SLOWLY.

EEEEEE

I REJOICED AT EVERY SCREAM, SAVORING THE MOMENT. I COULD ALMOST TASTE VICTORY.

...for the love of God...

...I BEG you!

BUT SOMETHING WAS WRONG. I COULDN'T QUITE PUT MY FINGER ON IT, BUT THIS WAS ALL GOING DOWN FAR TOO EASILY.

THEN I HEARD
HIS VOICE.

HIS HORRIFIC FORM
STOOD DIRECTLY
BEHIND ME. OBVIOUSLY,
I HAD BURNED ONLY
HIS *ARMOR*, NOT HIS
FLESH. LIKE I SAID,
HE WAS A *TRICKY*
SON-OF-A-GUN.

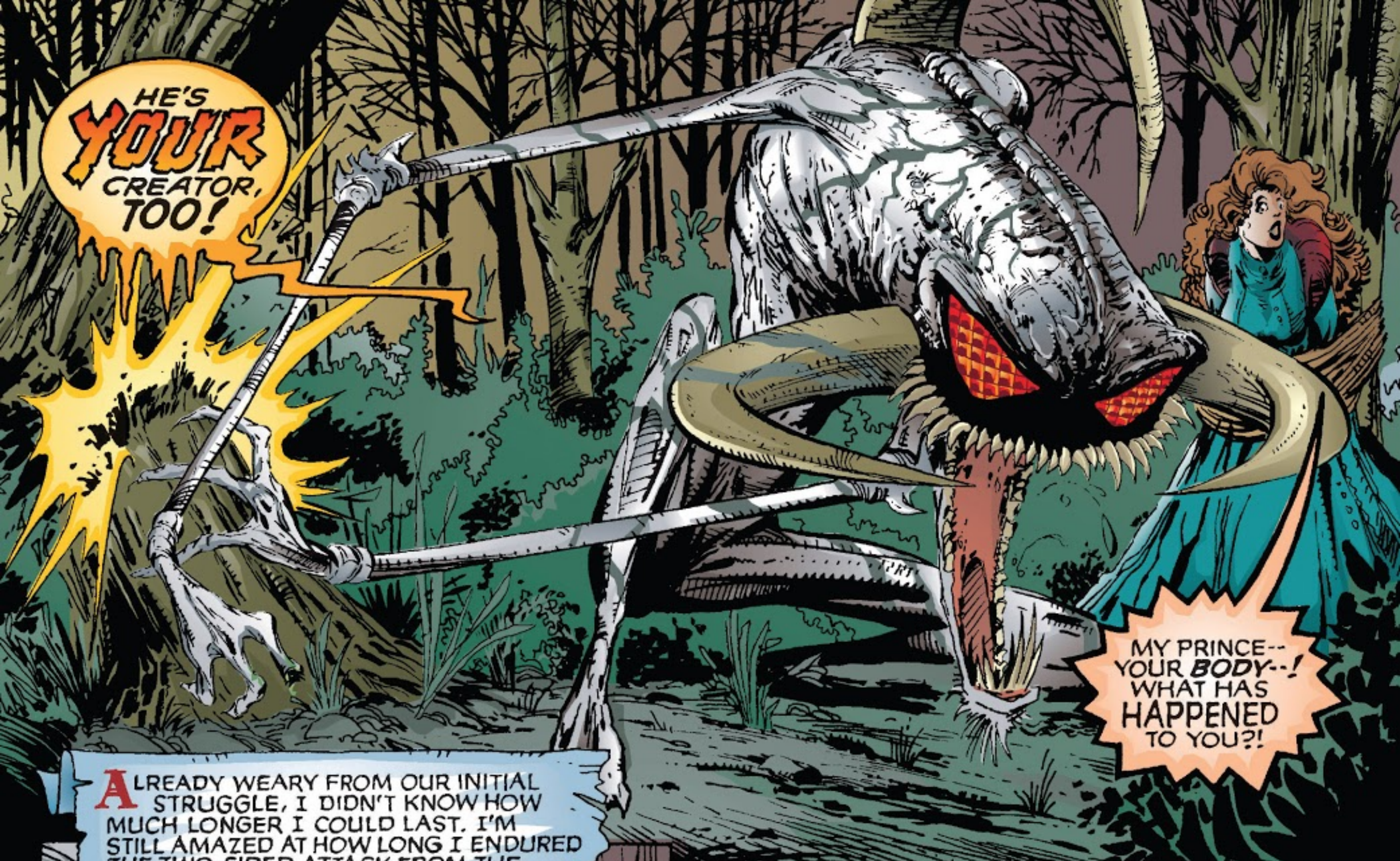
THIS
FINGER IS
BUT THE FIRST
OF MANY PIECES
I SHALL CUT
FROM YOUR
SATANIC
BODY.

HOW
DARE YOU
TOUCH MY
MAIDEN?

HOW **DARE** YOU
USE HER TO GET
AT ME. I'D HAVE THOUGHT
THE CREATURES OF HELL
HAD MORE COURAGE
THAN TO HIDE BEHIND
DEFENSELESS WOMEN.

HAS YOUR
CREATOR
BECOME SUCH A
COWARD?

TELEPORTING
OUT OF HIS
BATTLE GEAR
WAS PRETTY
SLICK.



HE'S
YOUR
CREATOR,
TOO!

MY PRINCE--
YOUR *BODY*--!
WHAT HAS
HAPPENED
TO YOU?!

ALREADY WEARY FROM OUR INITIAL STRUGGLE, I DIDN'T KNOW HOW MUCH LONGER I COULD LAST. I'M STILL AMAZED AT HOW LONG I ENDURED THE TWO-SIDED ATTACK FROM THE SPAWN-WIZARD AND HIS MOTHER.

I COULDN'T FAIL THEM, THE GOOD PEOPLE WHO PUT THEIR FAITH IN ME.

MY LADY IS BUT A CHILD, AN ARTISTIC SOUL. HER HANDIWORKS ARE THINGS OF JOY...

BLOW AFTER BLOW I WITHSTOOD, YET SOMEHOW I KNEW I WOULD OVERCOME. THE PEOPLE OF THAT LAND *NEEDED* ME.

...OF
BEAUTY.



TOMORROW
SHE MAY PAINT OF
MY VICTORY, OF
HOW THE DEVIL WAS
THWARTED IN HIS
CHALLENGE TO MY
SKILLS.

TELL YOUR
MASTER THAT I
WILL NEVER BE
HIS PUPPET. NOT
NOW... NOT
EVER!!

OUR EPIC
BATTLE CONTINUED.
WITH MY SUPERIOR
SKILLS, I WAS QUICKLY
ABLE TO OVERCOME
THE WITCH. AS PANIC
TOOK HOLD, HER SPELLS
BECAME INCREASINGLY
LESS EFFECTIVE. I WAS
NOW FREE TO CONCEN-
TRATE EXCLUSIVELY
ON HER SON.



PROBABLY MORE TIMES THAN EITHER COULD REMEMBER. EVEN MURDER CAN BECOME TEDIOUS, I SUPPOSE.

WELL, IT WAS HIGH TIME SOMEONE TURNED THE TABLES ON THOSE TWO...

HER COAL-BLACK EYES WITNESSED EVERY MEASURE OF HARM I INFLICTED UPON HER BOY. IT WARMED MY HEART.

HOW MANY TIMES HAD THEY CACKLED SADISTICALLY WHILE STRIPPING THE FLESH FROM A CRYING BABY, I ASKED MYSELF.



... SHOWING THEM FOR THE MONSTERS THEY WERE.



MY PRINCE...
WHAT HAVE YOU
BECOME?

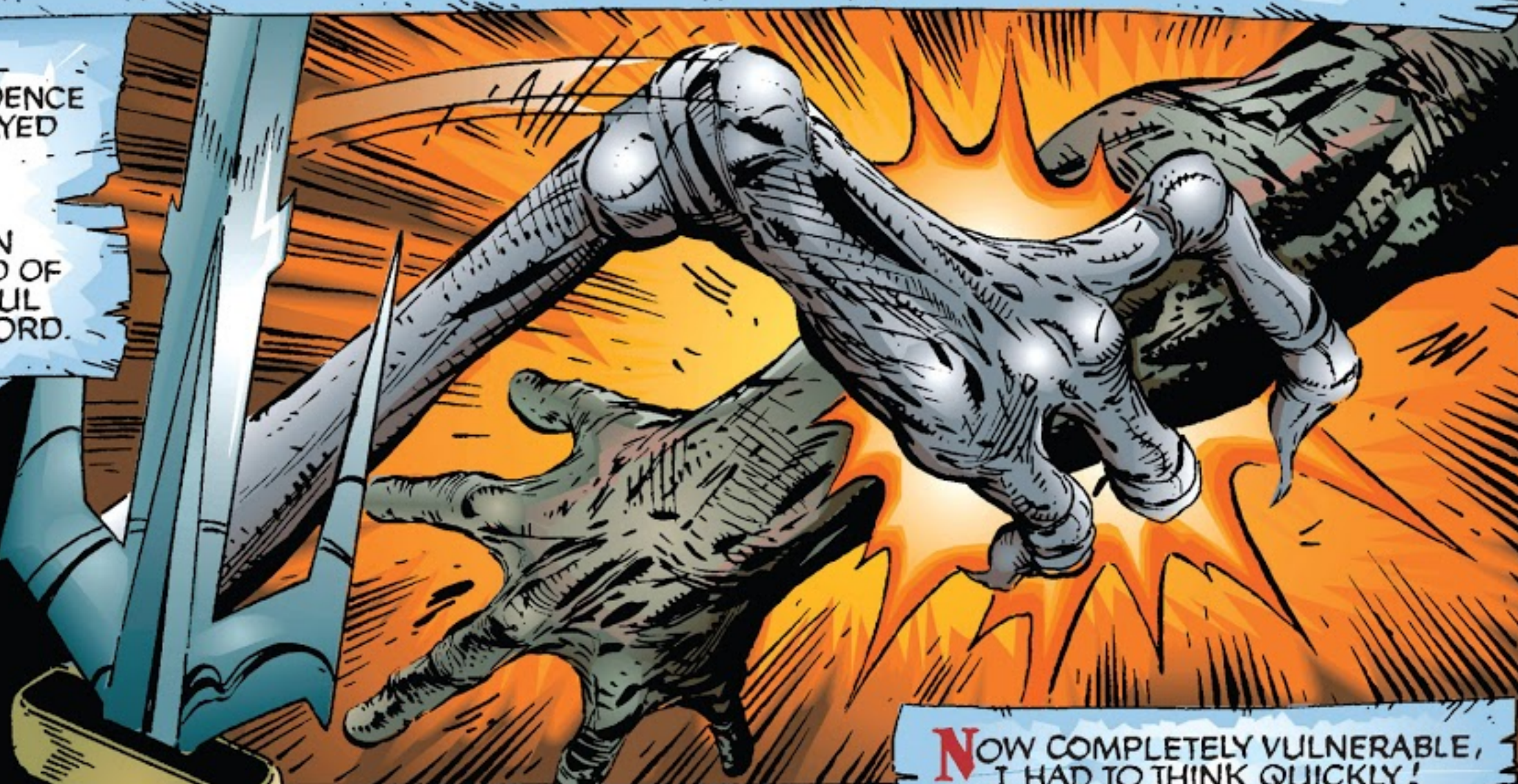


SOON, I GAINED THE ADVANTAGE AGAIN. THE BOSS HAD TRAINED ME WELL IN THE WAYS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE SPAWN.

FOR INSTANCE, WHEN FACED WITH AN OVERWHELMING THREAT, A SEASONED SPAWN WILL INSTINCTIVELY RELY ON HIS PHYSICAL SKILLS. ONLY RARELY WILL HE FEEL AT RISK ENOUGH TO DRAIN ANY OF HIS ENERGY IN RESPONSE. THESE SPAWN-WIZARDS ARE AS SKILLED AT HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT AS ANY MAN OR CREATURE THAT MAY CHALLENGE THEM. SENSING A SLIGHT IMPERFECTION IN MY PLAN OF ATTACK, HE FEINTED, THEN STRUCK.

MY OVER-CONFIDENCE HAD BETRAYED ME.

I HAD BEEN RELIEVED OF MY FAITHFUL BROADSWORD.



NOW COMPLETELY VULNERABLE, I HAD TO THINK QUICKLY!

BREATHING FIRE AT HIM WAS THE ONLY TYPE OF ATTACK I HADN'T TRIED YET. ON CAREFUL CONSIDERATION, I DECIDED NOT TO USE THAT ACE UP MY SLEEVE... YET. THE WIZARD HAD TO BE CLOSER FOR MY FLAMES TO BE EFFECTIVE.

I HAD TO WAIT FOR HIM TO COME IN NICE AND TIGHT AND ATTEMPT HIS KILLING BLOW BEFORE MY LAST GALLANT ATTEMPT AT VICTORY WAS PUT TO THE TEST.



HE DIDN'T FAIL ME.

WITH LIGHTNING SPEED, I
POUNCED ON HIM. THOUGH
HE WAS MUCH LARGER THAN
I, MY GRIT AND DETERMINA-
TION WERE CLEARLY TRAITS
NEW TO HIS EXPERIENCE.

I SWEAR
BY WHAT LIFE
REMAINS THAT
YOU SHALL PAY
FOR THE LIVES
OF THESE
VILLAGERS!

WHAT KIND
OF MONSTER
WOULD EAT THE
HEARTS OF
CHILDREN
?!!





A VERY
HUNGRY,
DESERVING
ONE.

THOUGH I
MUST CONFESS, I
DO PREFER THE HEARTS
OF **GROWN** HUMANS.
THEY'RE **FAR** MEATIER,
WITH LOTS AND LOTS
OF **FLAVOR**.

A CHILD'S
ORGANS AREN'T
NEARLY AS
RIPE!

DAMN
YOUR
SOUL!

Ah, DEAR BOY,
YOU'RE **FAR** TOO
LATE FOR **THAT**.

I SERVE THE **MASTER**
AND THE **DARKNESS**. HE
WISHED TO SEE IF YOU WERE
WORTHY OF A PLACE IN HIS
ARMY... WANTED TO
KNOW IF YOU COULD
BE A **LEADER**.

IT'LL BE MY
PLEASURE TO
TELL HIM THAT **I**,
A **NATIVE** OF HELL,
AM FAR BETTER
QUALIFIED THAN
SOME EARTHBORN
BEGINNER!

FASH

THEN, MY MOMENT
OF TRUTH. IT WAS
NOW OR **NEVER**!

I FRENCH-FRIED HIM AGAIN,
MAKING SURE I STRUCK
FLESH, NOT ARMOR,
THIS TIME.



A DIRECT HIT!

Uh?

WHAT TRICKERY
IS **THIS?!**

IT'S OVER,
HELLSPAWN!
YOU'VE
LOST!

NOW, THIS MYSTICAL
SWORD I'VE CREATED
DRAINS EVEN MORE.
THOUGH IT SHALL
SERVE A VERY WORTHY
CAUSE...

HIS
C-CAPE AND
CHAINS...
**THEY'RE
ALIVE!**

AND SO
AM I, DEAR
LOVE. THE EVIL
POWER THAT CREATED
ME DIDN'T WARN THIS
ENEMY TO THE
EXTENT OF MY
MAGIC.

HOW CARELESSLY
HE FORGOT MY
COSTUME. NOW IT
BINDS HIM INTO
SUBMISSION.

PREPARE
YOURSELF,
DEMON. YOU
ARE ABOUT
TO **DIE.**

IT WAS A
SIMPLE TASK TO
PROTECT MYSELF FROM
YOUR FLAMES, THOUGH
IT WASTED PRECIOUS
ENERGY.

IT WAS FINALLY
OVER. ONLY
THING LEFT TO DO
WAS COLLECT
MY PRIZED
TROPHY FOR
THE BOSS.



HIS HEAD!

...TO
SEND YOU BACK
TO **HELL!**



THE BATTLE WAS FINALLY OVER.



please...
don't hurt
me...

...don't...

YOU
HAVE NOTHING
TO FEAR, MY
LOVE.

I DID ONLY WHAT WAS NECESSARY
TO PROTECT YOU. THAT MY TRUE
APPEARANCE WAS REVEALED TO YOU
IS UNFORTUNATE. YOU NOW UNDER-
STAND WHY YOU'VE NEVER SEEN
ME WITHOUT ARMOR.



I NEEDED
YOU TO WANT ME
FOR MYSELF. I'M
TRULY SORRY IF
I'VE HURT YOU
IN ANY WAY.

I SWEAR
I MEANT YOU
NO HARM.

**STAY
AWAY!**
PLEASE LEAVE
ME ALONE,
MONSTER!

HELP!!
PLEASE--^{Sob}
**SOMEBODY
HELP!!**

DON'T
DO THIS
TO ME.

SOMEHOW, THE EVIL
WITCH ESCAPED
INTO THE NIGHT...
AND EVEN THAT
WORKED TO MY AD-
VANTAGE. SHE WAS
NEVER QUITE THE
SAME AFTER THAT
FIGHT, REPEATING THE
STORY OVER AND OVER.



I BEG YOU.

SO MY LEGEND WAS BORN. THE WITCH'S WITLESS RETELLINGS BECAME MORE ERRATIC AS SHE WANDERED, VILLAGE TO HAMLET. OVER THE GENERATIONS, OTHER STORYTELLERS RENDERED THE STORY WITH WIMSY AND MAGNIFICENCE. YOU WANT PROOF? IT'S AS CLOSE AS YOUR NEAREST LIBRARY.

THOUGH THE PICTURES AREN'T QUITE RIGHT, MY LEGACY HAS ENDURED. *I WAS THE FIRST DRAGON!*

IT'S NOT THE NAME I GIVE MYSELF, AND I DON'T KNOW WHY THEY COLORED ME GREEN, BUT HEY! THAT'S SHOW BIZ! I'M NOT COMPLAINING!



AS FOR MY BOSS, WELL, SUFFICE IT TO SAY HE WAS PLEASED WITH MY WORK.

EXCELLENT, dear child!

You have done a most admirable job. Not only did you prove that my new Spawn has the potential to become a fine officer, you also managed to destroy the only thing he held dear:

...another's love for him.

I now make you whole again. You've served me well.





WELL!

THERE
YOU **HAVE**
IT, BOYS!

NOT ONLY
DID I GET A
RAISE... I PUT
DRAGONS... THAT
IS, ME... INTO
WESTERN
CULTURE!

KINDA
BEAUTIFUL,
AIN'T IT?!

BOZO.

LOSER.

UH?

WHY...
YOU UN**GRATEFUL**
SWINE! AFTER ALL
THE CASH I LAID OUT,
TOO!

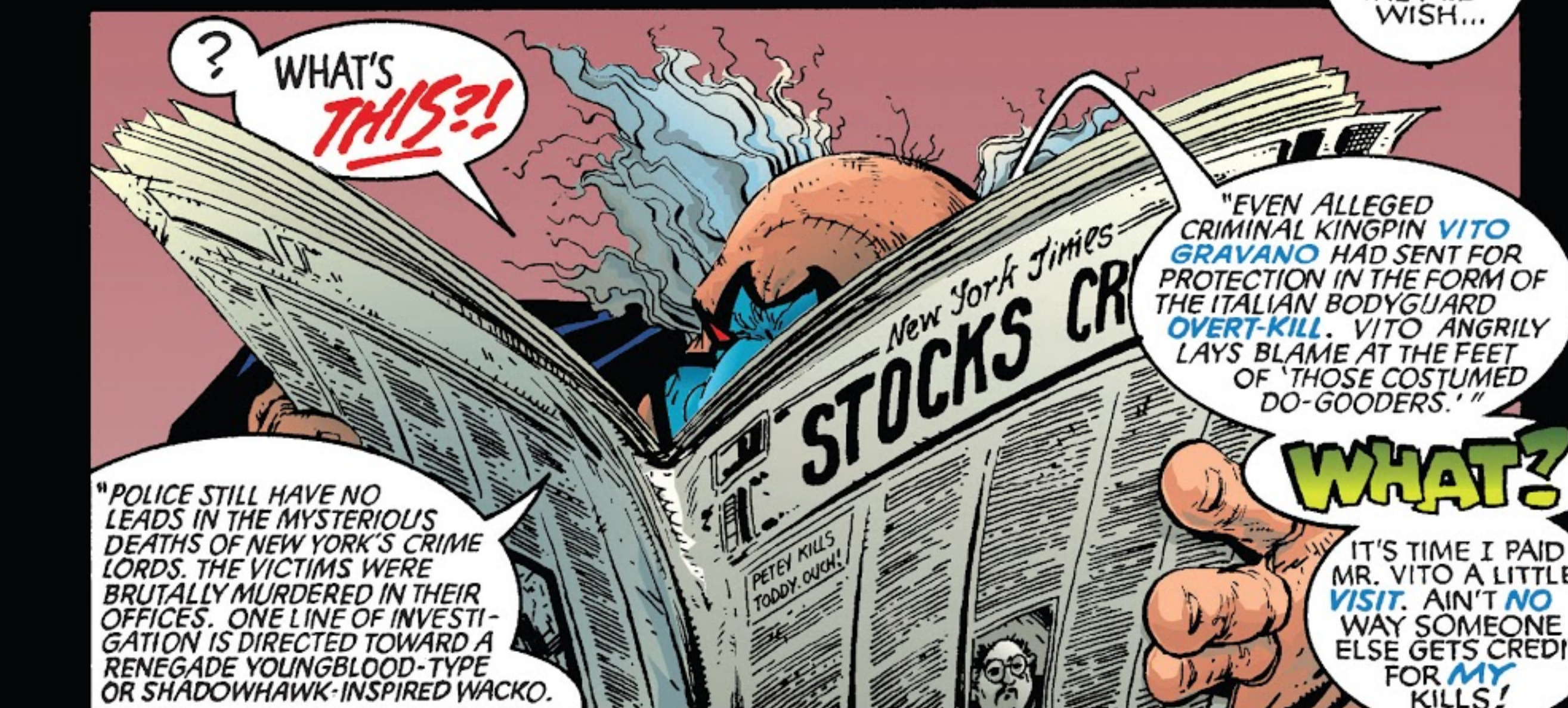
WHY, I
OUGHTTA...



UMPF!

THAT'S
IT, NO MORE
MISTER
NICE GUY!!

WHEN
I GET
FINISHED
WITH THOSE
LITTLE
RUG RATS,
THEY'LL
WISH...



? WHAT'S
THIS?!

"POLICE STILL HAVE NO
LEADS IN THE MYSTERIOUS
DEATHS OF NEW YORK'S CRIME
LORDS. THE VICTIMS WERE
BRUTALLY MURDERED IN THEIR
OFFICES. ONE LINE OF INVESTI-
GATION IS DIRECTED TOWARD A
RENEGADE YOUNGBLOOD-TYPE
OR SHADOWHAWK-INSPIRED WACKO.

"EVEN ALLEGED
CRIMINAL KINGPIN **VITO**
GRAVANO HAD SENT FOR
PROTECTION IN THE FORM OF
THE ITALIAN BODYGUARD
OVERT-KILL. VITO ANGRILY
LAYS BLAME AT THE FEET
OF 'THOSE COSTUMED
DO-GOODERS.' "

WHAT?

IT'S TIME I PAID
MR. VITO A LITTLE
VISIT. AIN'T **NO**
WAY SOMEONE
ELSE GETS CREDIT
FOR **MY**
KILLS!

"ESPECIALLY NOT THAT PUNK, SPAWN."*

THOUGH IT IS NO LONGER AS NECESSARY AS IT HAD BEEN, **AL SIMMONS**, STRICTLY BY HABIT, RESTS DAILY. HIS NEW CIRCUMSTANCE, AS AN AGENT OF EVIL FROM DEEP IN THE BOWELS OF SOME NETHERWORLD, HASN'T ERASED HIS HUMANISTIC SELF-IMAGE.

HABITS -- ROUTINES -- IN THESE NEW TIMES, THEY ARE HIS ONLY SOURCE FOR TRANQUILITY...

... IF YOU WILL, FOR ESCAPE.

HEY, BUD!

HOW MANY TIMES I GOTTA TELL YOU CREEPS TO **STAY AWAY** FROM THE **BACK DOOR!**

SLEEP.

YA HEAR ME?!

I'M GETTING FRIGGIN' **TIRED** OF YOU TRYING TO STEAL THE FOOD SCRAPS FROM MR. NUNOZ'S RESTAURANT. THOUGHT I MADE MYSELF **CLEAR** LAST TIME.

YOU MUST BE THE **DEAF** ONE OF THE BUNCH!

URRK

OKAY!

OKAY!

TAKE IT EASY. NO SENSE GETTING IN SUCH A BIG HUFF. I'LL BE OUT OF YOUR WAY IN A MINUTE.

DIDN'T KNOW SOMEONE COULD TAKE SUCH **PRIDE** IN PROTECTING SCRAPS OF LEFT-OVER LIVER.

*FOR DETAILS OF THE VIOLATOR'S VISIT TO VITO GRAVANO'S OFFICE, SEE THE VIOLATOR'S OWN MINI-SERIES, COMING IN 1994...Tom.



Oh-- A
SMART
ASS, eh?

I DON'T NEED
NO GRIEF FROM
SOME TWO-BIT
DRUNK LOSER!

GET ME?!

GUH!

AS IT HAPPENS, AL WAS GETTING UP TO LEAVE WHEN THE MUSCLE-BOUND STIFF CHALLENGED HIM. YEARS AGO, AL'S MILITARY TRAINING TAUGHT HIM THAT NOT EVERY CONFRONTATION LEADS TO BATTLE... THAT THERE ARE TIMES WHEN A PEACEFUL RETREAT IS GOOD STRATEGY.

AS HIS MISSIONS BECAME MORE AND MORE SECRETIVE, AL DEVELOPED A REPERTOIRE OF SUBTLE REACTIONS.

THAT NEED HAS NEVER BEEN GREATER: HIS TOTAL ENERGY IS LIMITED. AL, A.K.A. SPAWN, NEEDS TO KEEP HIS PHYSICAL CONFLICTS TO A MINIMUM.



IT TOOK LT. COLONEL AL SIMMONS A LONG TIME TO GRASP THAT NOTION. HIS INSTINCTS TOLD HIM THAT EVERY SITUATION HAD TO BE SETTLED RIGHT THERE, ON THE SPOT. FORTUNATELY, HE LEARNED BETTER.



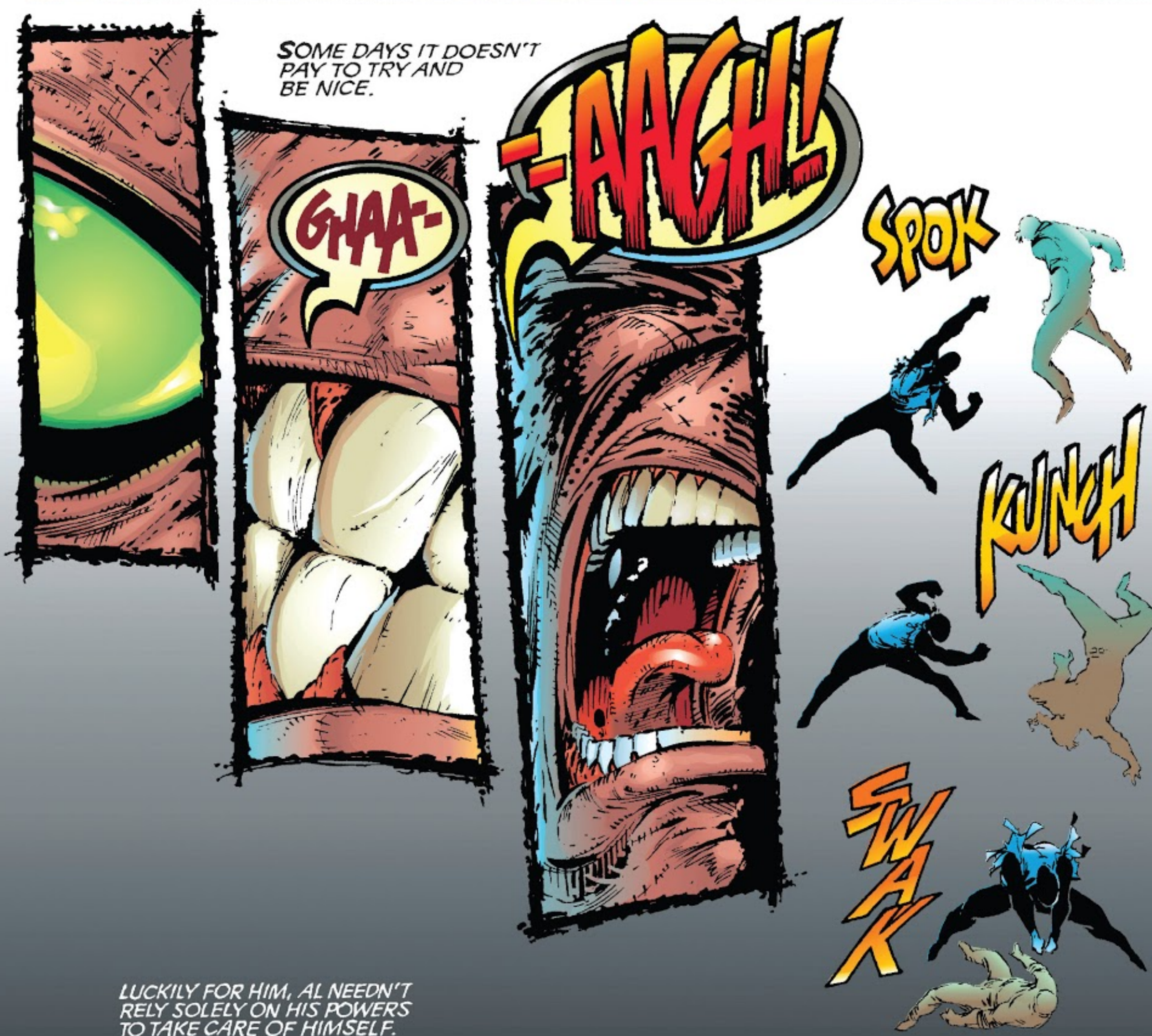
I'LL BREAK
YOUR NOSE!

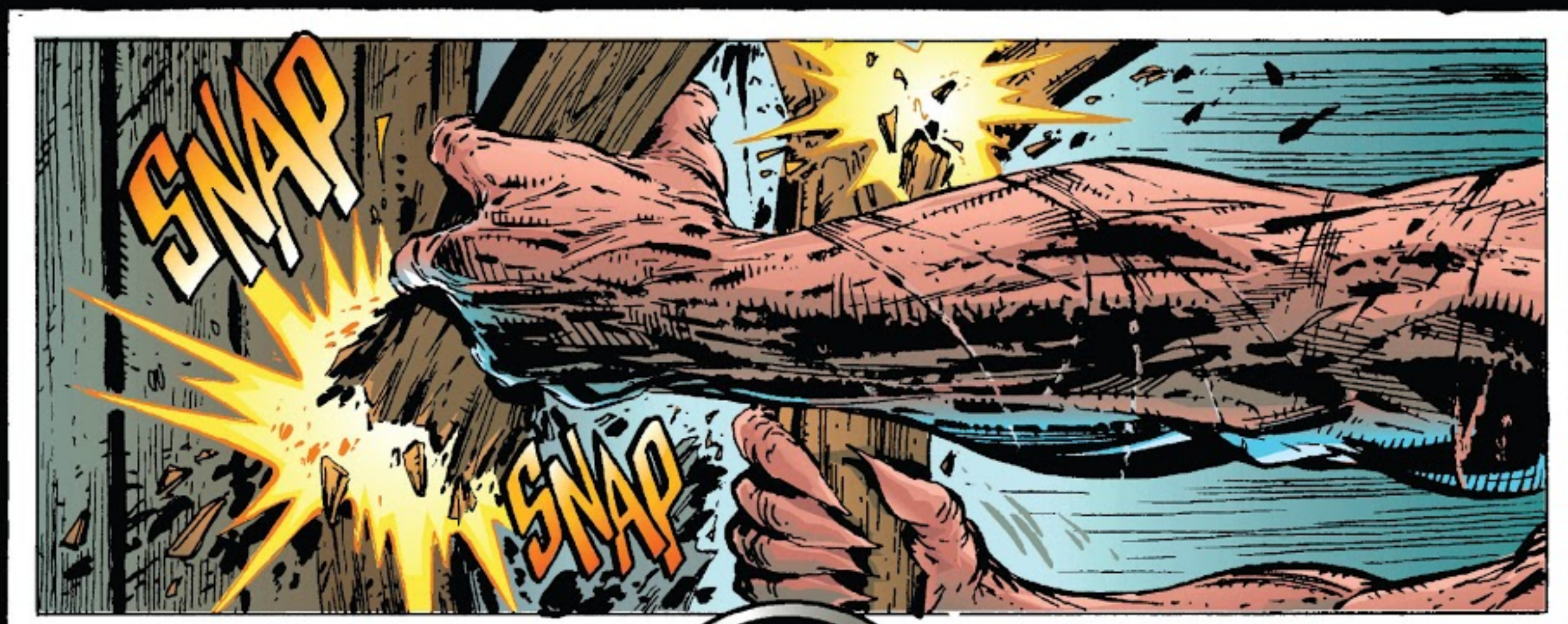
SMART
ASS!

POWER USAGE
WOULD BE
STUPID RIGHT
NOW.



DAMMIT...





THUNK!
THUNK!



GET THE
PICTURE,
NOW?

I COULD'VE
RAMMED THESE
BOARDS SO FAR THROUGH
THOSE BEADY LITTLE EYES
THAT YOUR BRAINS
WOULD BE OOZING
OUT THE SOCKETS!

YA SEE, I DON'T
LIKE BEING MUSCLED.
ESPECIALLY WHEN I
SAID I'D LEAVE.

NOW
THEN.

UNLESS YOU WANT
ME TO GET REALLY PISSED
OFF, I SUGGEST WE
SWITCH ROLES.

IT'S MY
TURN TO ASK YOU
TO LEAVE.

PRONTO!

Y-YES
SIR.





GETTIN' TIRED
OF PEOPLE CONSTANTLY
INVADING MY
TURF.

I JUST MIGHT
HAVE TO SEND OUT
A LONG, **LOUD**
SIGNAL:

THIS IS
SPAWN
TERRITORY!



"WE KNOW YOU'VE BEEN **MESSING** WITH US, FITZGERALD. NO ONE LIKES A **RAT**."

"SO YOU'D BETTER BE A VERY GOOD BOY AND HOPE WE DON'T FIND NOTHING **INCRIMINATING**."

WELL, GOTTA **GO** NOW. KISS THAT BEAUTIFUL WIFE OF YOURS FOR ME. SHE SURE IS A LOOKER. I'VE BEEN **WATCHING** HER FOR ALMOST **THREE WEEKS** NOW. PRETTY SEXY **NIGHTGOWN** SHE'S BEEN WEARING.

YOU SONUVABITCH.

NOW NOW, TERRY. IT'S A DIRTY JOB, BUT SOMEONE'S GOT TO DO IT.

KISS THAT **BABY** OF YOURS FOR ME, TOO.

CLICK

IT WILL BE NEARLY TWENTY MINUTES BEFORE TERRY MOVES...

...ANOTHER FORTY BEFORE HE STOPS SWEATING.

"'CAUSE IF WE **DO**, THERE AIN'T NO PLACE YOU'RE GOING TO BE ABLE TO HIDE FROM US. AND WHEN WE FIND YOU, WORDS CAN'T DESCRIBE THE KIND OF **PAIN** WE CAN INFLICT."



NEXT ISSUE:

GRANT MORRISON
GREG CAPULLO



®

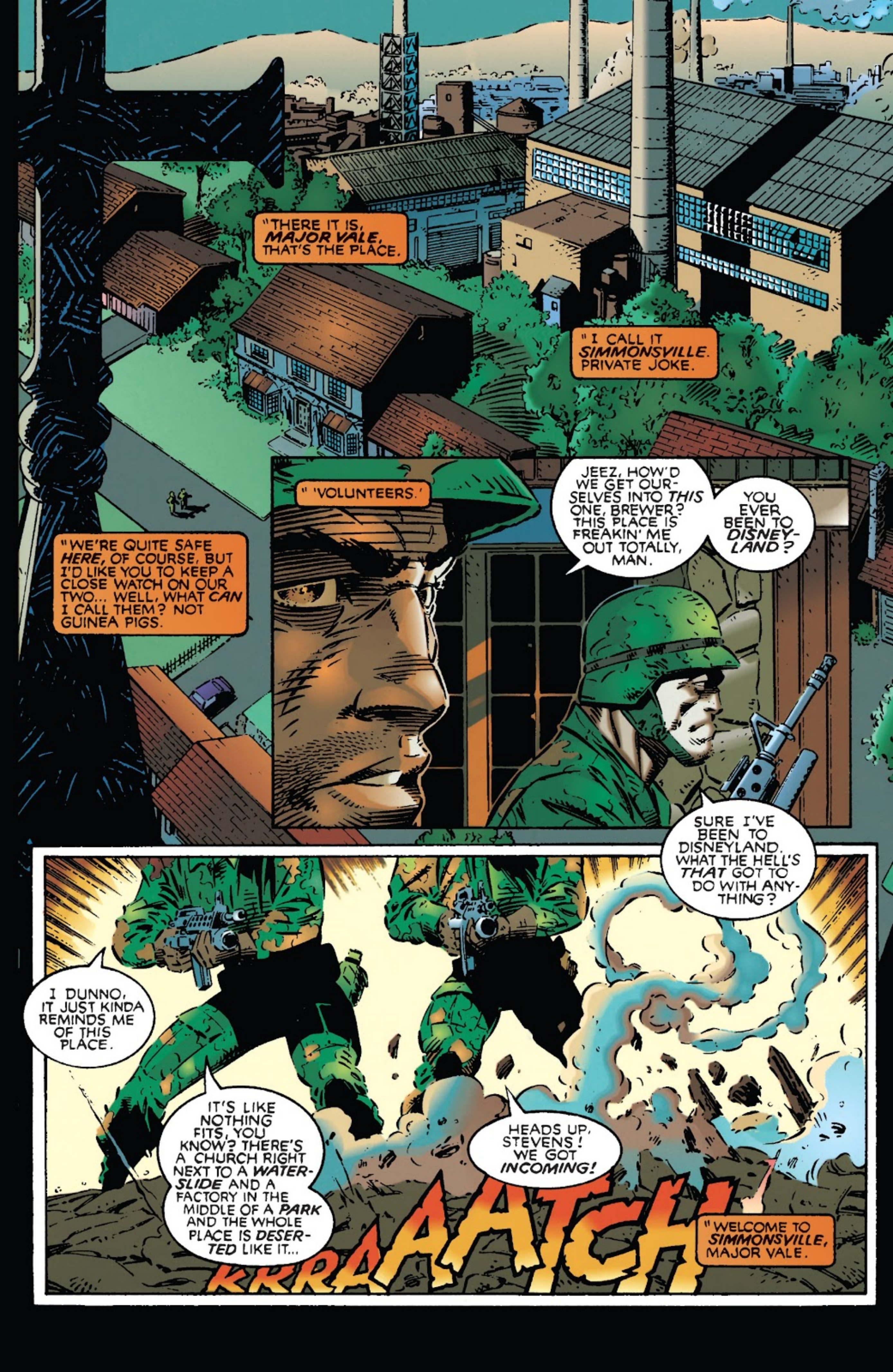
SPAWN®

image

16
DEC

DIGITAL
EDITION





"THERE IT IS,
MAJOR VALE,
THAT'S THE PLACE.

"I CALL IT
SIMMONSVILLE.
PRIVATE JOKE.

"WE'RE QUITE SAFE
HERE, OF COURSE, BUT
I'D LIKE YOU TO KEEP A
CLOSE WATCH ON OUR
TWO... WELL, WHAT CAN
I CALL THEM? NOT
GUINEA PIGS.

"VOLUNTEERS."

JEEZ, HOW'D
WE GET OUR-
SELVES INTO *THIS*
ONE, BREWER?
THIS PLACE IS
FREAKIN' ME
OUT TOTALLY,
MAN.

YOU
EVER
BEEN TO
**DISNEY-
LAND?**

SURE I'VE
BEEN TO
DISNEYLAND.
WHAT THE HELL'S
THAT GOT TO
DO WITH ANY-
THING?

I DUNNO,
IT JUST KINDA
REMINDS ME
OF THIS
PLACE.

IT'S LIKE
NOTHING
FITS, YOU
KNOW? THERE'S
A CHURCH RIGHT
NEXT TO A **WATER-
SLIDE** AND A
FACTORY IN THE
MIDDLE OF A **PARK**
AND THE WHOLE
PLACE IS **DESER-
TED** LIKE IT...

HEADS UP,
STEVENS!
WE GOT
INCOMING!

"WELCOME TO
SIMMONSVILLE,
MAJOR VALE.

KRRRAATCH!

"OUR VERY OWN LITTLE
PIECE OF HELL ON
EARTH."



oh my
God



"IT HAPPENED
JUST OVER FIVE
YEARS AGO,
MAJOR:

"... A ROUTINE UNDER-
GROUND *A-BOMB* TEST
HERE IN *NEVADA*
OPENED A *HOLE* INTO
WHAT WE THOUGHT WAS
ANOTHER DIMENSION.

"WE'D STUMBLED ONTO A
DOORWAY TO *HELL*.

"THAT OTHER
DIMENSION TURNED
OUT TO BE *HELL*,
MAJOR VALE.

"WE SENT IN AN
ARMED TASK
FORCE AND THEY
WERE NEVER SEEN
AGAIN. LAST THING
WE HEARD FROM
THEM WAS A
GARBLED RADIO
MESSAGE ABOUT
WATERFALLS OF
BLOOD AND FOGS
THAT DISSOLVED
FLESH.

NO
WAY!

NO
FRIGGIN'
WAY,
MAN!

THIS
AIN'T *REAL*,
STEVENS.

IT'S GOTTA
BE SOME KINDA
HALLUCINATION.
THEY'RE TESTING
A *DRUG* ON US
OR SOMETHING.
IT CAN'T BE...

"ONE THING
WE DID FIND
OUT THOUGH,
IS THAT HELL
IS COMPOSED
OF A SUB-
STANCE WE
CALL *PSYCHO-
PLASM*.

"PSYCHOPLASM IS
A MATERIAL OF A
KIND *UNKNOWN*
IN THE PHYSICAL
WORLD. IT CHANGES
IN RESPONSE TO
MENTAL STATES.

"WHATEVER YOU'RE
THINKING OF, WHATEVER
YOU DESIRE OR FEAR,
PSYCHOPLASM *BECOMES* THAT THING.

SKLUTCH



WHERE ARE YOU, LARRY?

WHERE ARE YOU?

BRABRABRABRAK

BREWER!

Oh JESUS...

BOO!

YAAAA!

NOOO!

"JUST IMAGINE WHAT IT WOULD MEAN TO THE U.S. MILITARY IF WE COULD GAIN CONTROL OF SUCH A SUBSTANCE, MAJOR VALE."

BREWER?

LARRY?

"WHICH BRINGS ME TO AL SIMMONS."

DON'T
HURT
ME.

PLEASE
DON'T...
I GOT A
WIFE...
PLEASE ...

"SIMMONS WAS A GOOD
MAN, ONE OF OUR BEST.
GOD KNOWS, I TRAINED
HIM MYSELF, TAUGHT HIM
EVERYTHING I KNOW.
BUT HE WENT SOFT, HE
BECAME EXPENDABLE
AND SO I MADE A **DEAL**."

"THERE ARE... **PRESENCES**
IN HELL, MAJOR. I CONTACTED
ONE OF THOSE PRESENCES AND
MADE A DEAL WITH IT. I GAVE
IT SIMMONS FOR ITS **ARMY**, IT
GAVE ME **PSYCHOPLASM**."

GIMME
A BREAK,
SOLDIER.

"THE TOWN YOU'RE LOOKING
AT, THE TOWN WHERE OUR TWO
UNFORTUNATE VOLUNTEERS ARE
CURRENTLY FACING THEIR WORST
NIGHTMARES, IS COMPOSED
ENTIRELY OF **PSYCHOPLASM**."

STOP!
PLEASE!

Oh
GOD!

STOP!

WILL YA
QUIT WITH
THE 'GOD'
ALLA
TIME?

YER MAKIN' ME
NAUSEOUS.

SHOW
SOME SPINE,
WHY DON'CHA?
YOUR **BUDDY**
SURE DID.
Hee hee.

"WHEN WE SENT
SIMMONS TO HELL, WE
STOLE HIS **MEMORIES**.
THOSE MEMORIES,
ACTING UPON RAW
PSYCHOPLASM, CREATED
SIMMONSVILLE-- A
FAKE TOWN BUILT FROM
THE JUMBLE OF ONE
MAN'S RECOLLECTIONS."

"HOUSES THAT HE LIVED IN, THE SCHOOLS
HE WENT TO, PLAYGROUNDS HE PLAYED
IN, FACTORIES AND CHURCHES AND
PARKS-- ALL RECREATED HERE IN THE
DESERT, ABOVE THE DOORWAY TO HELL."

NOOOO

BADUMP

"THIS IS WHERE WE'VE BEEN CONDUCTING OUR RESEARCH, MAJOR. THIS IS WHAT I WANTED YOU TO SEE."

SLAM!

INTERESTED?

THAT'S THE CRAZIEST GODDAMN THING I EVER HEARD, MR. WYNN, BUT I CAN'T DENY WHAT I JUST SAW WITH MY OWN EYES.

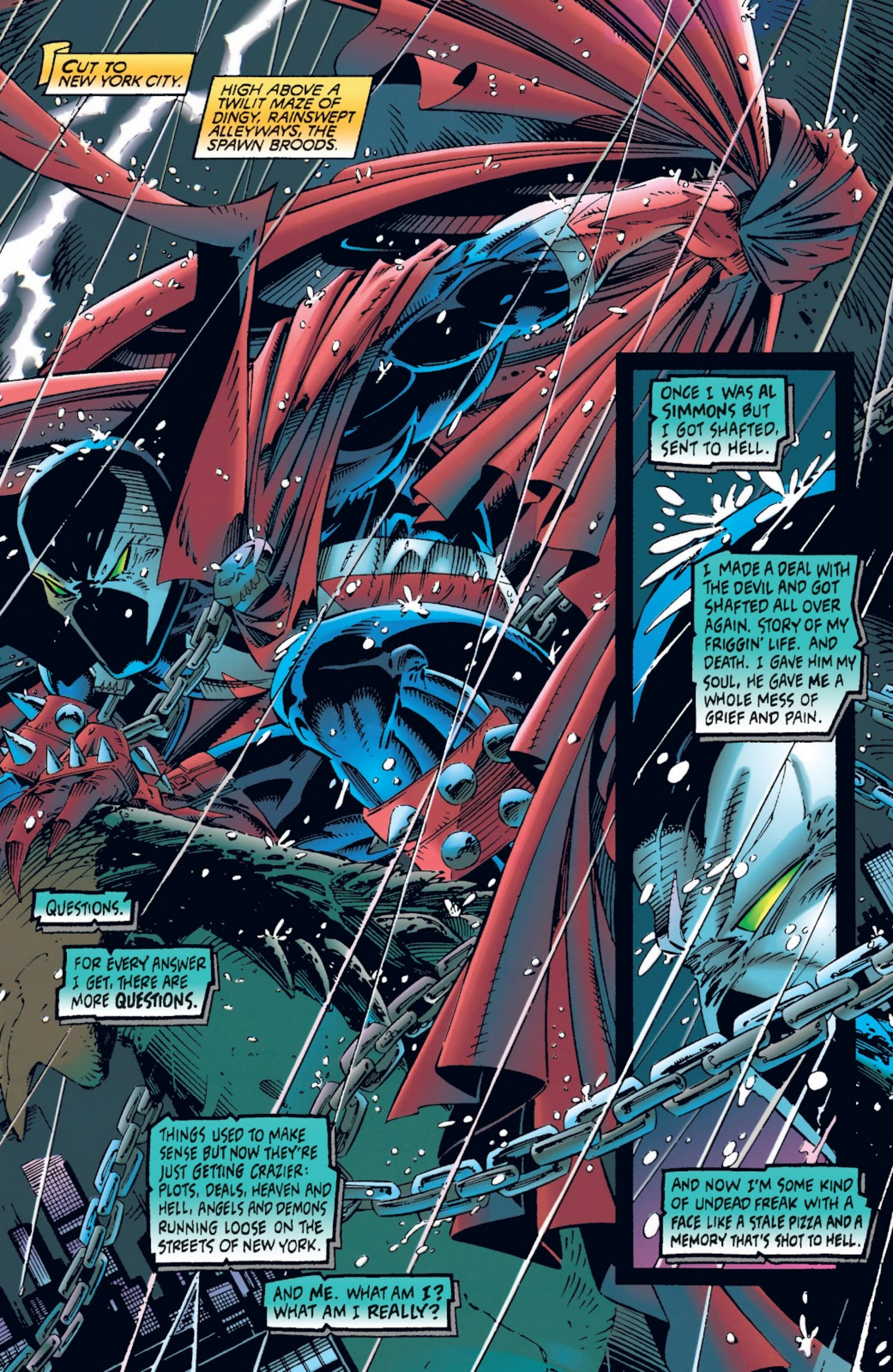
THOSE THINGS WERE... **DEMONS?** IS THAT WHAT YOU'RE TELLIN' ME?

I JUST DON'T KNOW HOW I CAN TAKE THIS ON BOARD... I...

IT IS ALL A LITTLE OVERWHELMING, MAJOR VALE. I CAN UNDERSTAND THAT.

WHY NOT THINK THINGS OVER AND WE'LL TALK AGAIN IN AN HOUR OR TWO, WHEN I'VE COMPLETED MY DAILY **WORKOUT.**

HOW DOES THAT SOUND?

A dramatic comic book panel showing Spawn, a character with a large, dark, hooded head and a red cape, looking down at a small, red, spiky creature on the ground. The scene is set in a dark, rainy New York City street with tall buildings in the background. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights and deep shadows.

CUT TO
NEW YORK CITY.

HIGH ABOVE A
TWILIT MAZE OF
DINGY, RAINSWEEP
ALLEYWAYS, THE
SPAWN BROODS.

ONCE I WAS AL
SIMMONS BUT
I GOT SHAFTED,
SENT TO HELL.

I MADE A DEAL WITH
THE DEVIL AND GOT
SHAFTED ALL OVER
AGAIN. STORY OF MY
FRIGGIN' LIFE. AND
DEATH. I GAVE HIM MY
SOUL, HE GAVE ME A
WHOLE MESS OF
GRIEF AND PAIN.

QUESTIONS.

FOR EVERY ANSWER
I GET, THERE ARE
MORE QUESTIONS.

THINGS USED TO MAKE
SENSE BUT NOW THEY'RE
JUST GETTING CRAZIER:
PLOTS, DEALS, HEAVEN AND
HELL, ANGELS AND DEMONS
RUNNING LOOSE ON THE
STREETS OF NEW YORK.

AND ME. WHAT AM I?
WHAT AM I REALLY?

AND NOW I'M SOME KIND
OF UNDEAD FREAK WITH A
FACE LIKE A STALE PIZZA AND A
MEMORY THAT'S SHOT TO HELL.



I'M FINDING OUT MORE AND MORE EVERY DAY BUT I STILL DON'T KNOW WHAT REALLY HAPPENED OR WHAT I REALLY AM.

AL SIMMONS IS DEAD. CHAPEL PULLED THE TRIGGER BUT WHAT I HAVE TO KNOW IS WHO GAVE THE ORDER?

WHO SET ME UP?

WHO SENT ME TO HELL?

AND IF I'M DEAD, HOW COME I HAVE A BODY? SINCE WHEN DID DEAD GUYS GET TO HAVE BODIES?

AND IF I'M HERE, WHAT DID THEY BURY IN AL SIMMONS' GRAVE?



THERE'S ONLY
ONE WAY TO
FIND OUT.

I KNOW WHERE I
HAVE TO GO EVEN
THOUGH IT SCARES
THE CRAP OUT OF ME.
THERE'S SOMETHING
I SHOULD HAVE DONE
A LONG TIME AGO.

BUT FIRST I
NEED TO LET
OFF SOME
STEAM.

MAYBE SPREAD A
LITTLE OF THIS
PAIN AROUND.

WELL, WHAT
HAVE WE GOT
HERE?

ONE MORE PIECE
OF *GARBAGE* THAT
DIDN'T GET SWEEP AWAY.
I DUNNO WHAT THIS
CITY'S COMIN' TO,
I REALLY DON'T.

BACK
OFF,
GUYS.

I DON'T
REALLY
THINK
YOU WANT
TO DO
THIS...



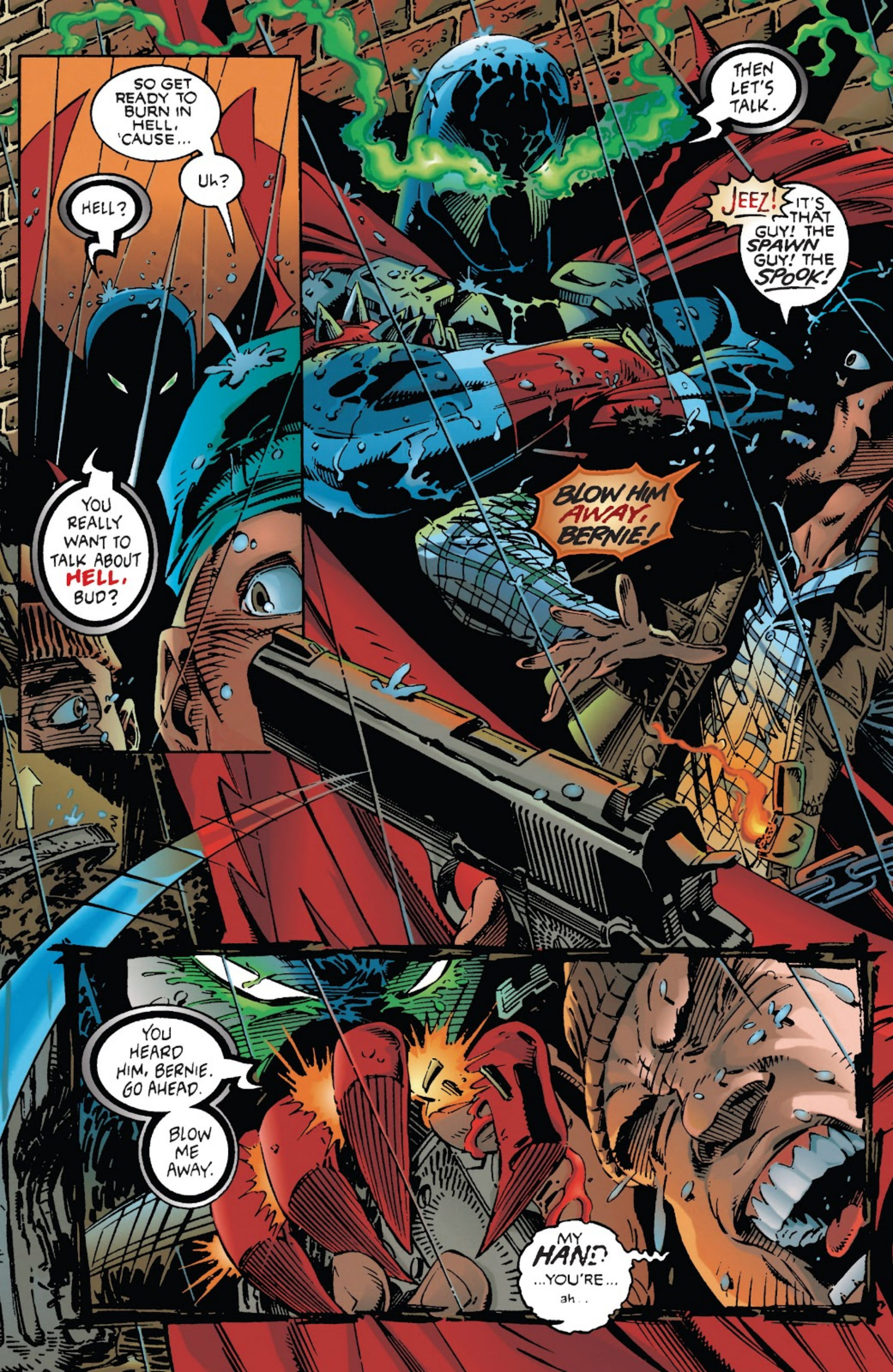
OH YEAH.
WELL, I DON'T
GIVE A FLYIN'
FART *WHAT*
YOU THINK,
SCUMBAG.

WE'RE JUST
A COUPLE OF
CONCERNED CITIZENS
TRYIN' TO DO SOMETHIN'
ABOUT THE *HOMELESS*
PROBLEM. WE CALL IT
THE '*BURN A BUM*'
SCHEME, DON'T
WE BERNIE?

'BURN
A BUM.'
HUR HUR
HUR HUR



SOLINE



SO GET
READY TO
BURN IN
HELL,
'CAUSE...

HELL?

Uh?

THEN
LET'S
TALK.

JEEZ! IT'S
THAT
GUY! THE
SPAWN
GUY! THE
SPOOK!

YOU
REALLY
WANT TO
TALK ABOUT
HELL,
BUD?

**BLOW HIM
AWAY,
BERNIE!**

YOU
HEARD
HIM, BERNIE.
GO AHEAD.

BLOW
ME
AWAY.

MY
HAND

...YOU'RE...
ah...

LOOKS
LIKE BERNIE'S
TOO BUSY RIGHT
NOW.

YOU
WANT TO
TAKE A
SHOT?

SCUM!

JESUS,
GIMME A
BREAK. WE
WEREN'T GONNA
TORCH THE GUY.
IT WAS JUST
A JOKE...

IT'S NOT
FAIR... USIN'
POWERS
AGAINST
NORMAL
GUYS...

YOU
THINK I NEED
POWERS TO
DEAL WITH
SCUM LIKE
YOU?

DO
YOU?

NNNNNGGGG

... MY
HAND...

...NNN
ZZZ



SORRY
ABOUT THAT.
GUESS I WAS
JUST FEELING
PISSSED.

GUESS
YOU
WERE.

I KNOW
IT'S HARD
'ROUND HERE
BUT TRY TO KEEP
OUT OF TROUBLE.

AND IF ANYONE
COMES LOOKING FOR ME,
TELL THEM I'VE GONE TO
DIG UP AN OLD
FRIEND.

SURE I WILL,
HELLSPAWN.

SURE
I WILL.

NOT FAR AWAY,
IN MIDTOWN
MANHATTAN,
IN A MIRROR-
WALLED
BUILDING WITH
NO NAME AND
NO NUMBER...

WELL,
IF WE'VE HAD
TO WITHDRAW
OUR DIPLOMATIC
ENVOY FROM HELL
THE PROBLEM IS
SERIOUS, YES.
YES, I UNDER-
STAND.

RIGHT
AWAY...
YES.

...I WOULD
NEVER
QUESTION A
DIRECT ORDER,
NO, BUT ISN'T
THIS A LITTLE
...WELL,
DRASTIC?

I'VE DONE
MY BEST TO
RUN TERRAN
AFFAIRS
QUIETLY AND
WITHOUT...

PROBLEMS,
GABRIELLE?

NEW
ORDERS FROM
UPSTAIRS.
REMEMBER THE
EARTHBOUND HELL-
SPAWN WHO
DEFEATED
ANGELA
RECENTLY?

WELL,
APPARENTLY
THIS SPAWN IS
SPECIAL AND
SPECIAL MEANS
DANGEROUS. WE'VE
BEEN EMPOWERED TO
CREATE OUR OWN
SOLDIER TO
DESTROY THE
CREATURE.

THE BALANCE
OF POWER MUST BE
SERIOUSLY COMPRO-
MISED IF **CONTROL'S**
PREPARED TO INTERVENE
SO DIRECTLY IN THE
AFFAIRS OF THE EARTHLY
PLANE.

LET'S
JUST HOPE
OUR ORBITAL
ANGEL STATION
IS UP AND
RUNNING,
MICHAELA.

WE
HAVE
WORK
TO DO.



...THAT'S
THE SITUATION
AS IT STANDS. WE
HAVE FULL AUTHORITY
TO EMPOWER A
HUMAN AGENT TO
DESTROY THE
HELLSPAWN.

IS THE
STATION
READY?

OF COURSE.
IT WAS A SIMPLE
MATTER TO HOLLOW
OUT THE BODIES OF THE
HUMANS HERE AND
INSTALL OUR OWN
ESSENCES WITH-
IN THEM.

THIS STATION
IS NOW FULLY
OPERATIONAL,
GABRIELLE.

WE WILL
BEGIN THE
PROCEDURE
IMMEDIATELY.

I WILL
CONTACT THE
AVENGING ANGEL
OF THE FIFTH HEAVEN
AND ARRANGE FOR
THE TRANSFER OF
THE ELEMENTAL
FIRE.

YOUR
SOLDIER WILL
BE FULLY
EMPOWERED AND
READY FOR COMBAT
BEFORE SUNRISE
YOUR TIME.

A
SOLDIER?

FEARFUL
TIMES ARE
UPON US, IT
SEEMS.

WHAT
KIND OF HUMAN
HAS THE STRENGTH
TO BEAR THE
ELEMENTAL
FIRE?

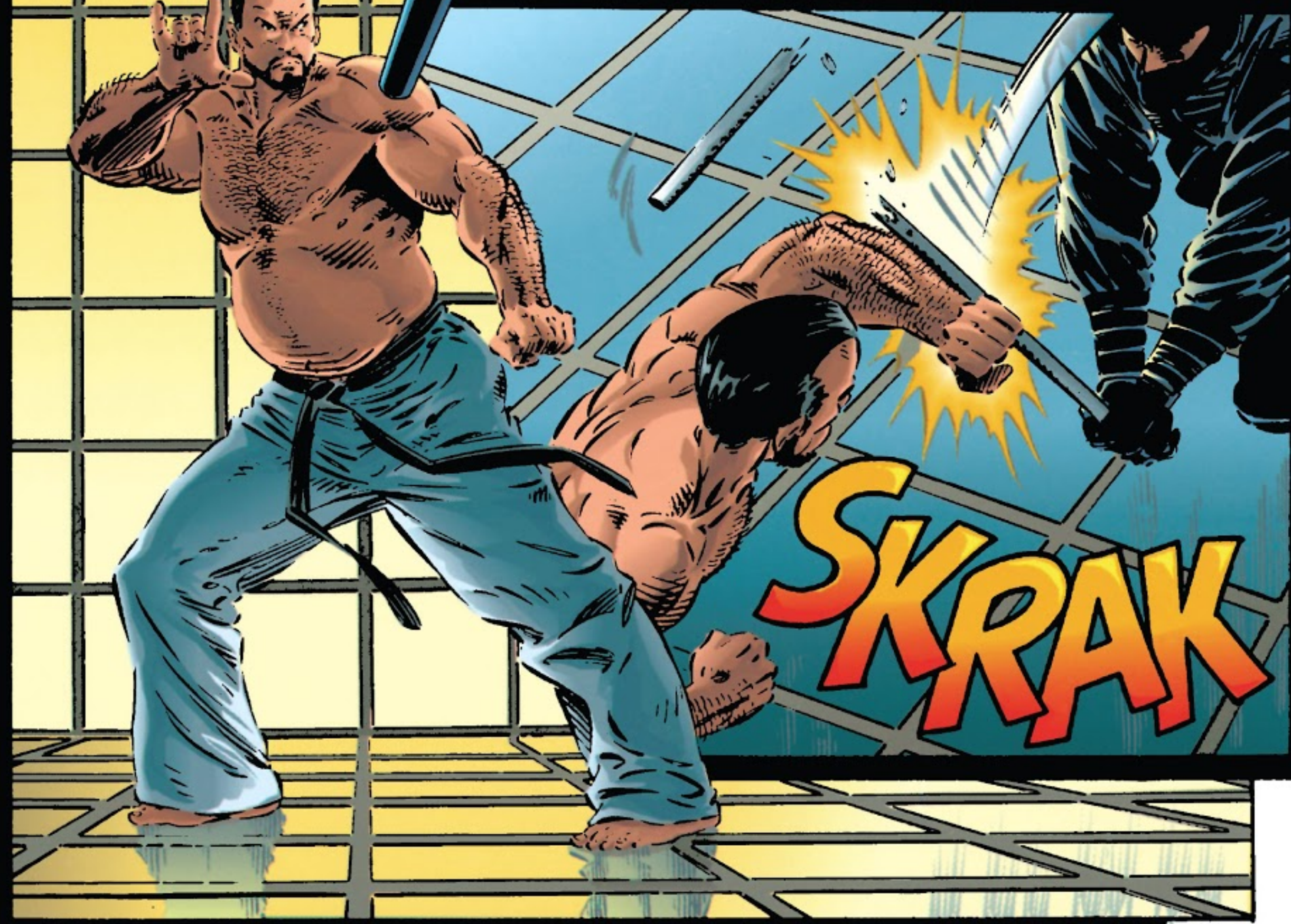
THE
SUBJECT HAS
ALREADY BEEN
SELECTED.

I'M
BRINGING
HIM UP
NOW.

READY
WHEN
YOU ARE,
GENTLE-
MEN.



WOK



SKRAK



WHAT-
EVER THEY'RE
PAYING YOU
GENTLEMEN,
IT'S TOO
MUCH.

YOU
FIGHT LIKE
LITTLE GIRLS.
IF I WAS AN
ENEMY
YOU'D BE
DEAD
MEAT.

AS IT
IS, YOU'RE
OUT OF A
JOB.

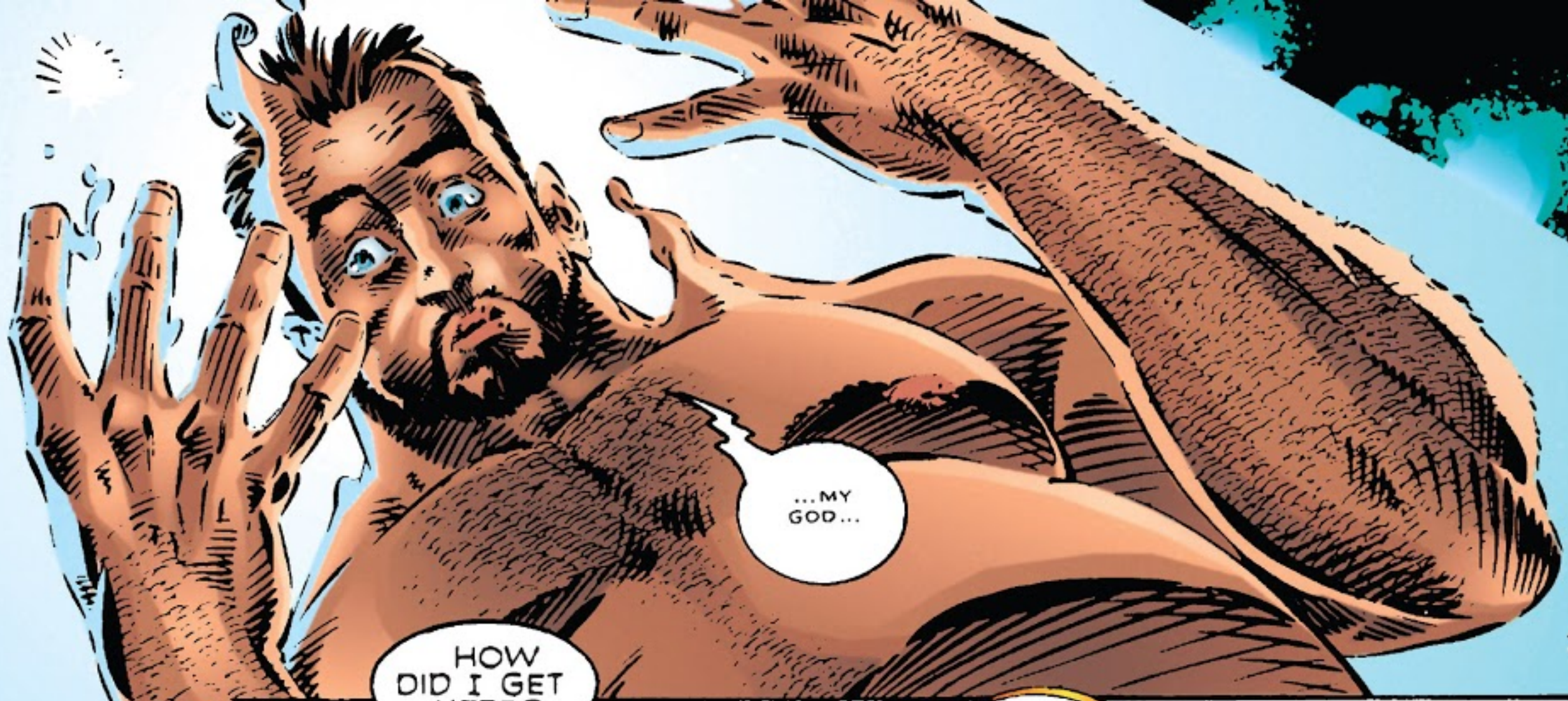
ACTIVATING
TRANSFERENCE.

FIRE
THOSE
EXCUSES FOR
SOLDIERS IN
THERE AND
TELL MAJOR
VALE I'LL BE
WITH HIM
IN...

...MY
GOD...

SIR...
?





...MY
GOD...

HOW
DID I GET
HERE?

WHO THE
HELL **ARE** YOU
PEOPLE? ARE
YOU **HIS**
PEOPLE?

**ANSWER
ME, DAMN
YOU!**

WE DO NOT
SERVE THE
MALEBOLGIA.

WE ARE THE
SERVANTS
OF A... HIGHER
POWER.

AS WILL
YOU BE
WHEN OUR
WORK IS
DONE.



NO,
WAIT!
YOU DON'T
KNOW WHO
I AM!
I...



IT'S
BURNING!
GOD HELP
ME, IT'S
BURNING!



THIS IS THE PLACE.

THIS IS WHERE THEY BURIED ME.



WHAT AM I SO SCARED OF?

THERE WON'T BE ANYTHING IN HERE.

THERE CAN'T BE.



THEY CAN'T HAVE BURIED AL SIMMONS HERE BECAUSE I'M AL SIMMONS.

I'LL PULL BACK
THE LID OF THIS
GODDAMN COFFIN
AND I'LL LOOK IN
AND I'LL SEE...

No.

NO!

THE SMELL! LIKE
SOME SICK, ANCIENT
THING BREATHING IN
MY FACE... FILTHY...
ROTTEN...

IT'S ME.
DEAR GOD
IN HEAVEN,
IT'S MY
BODY.

AND IF THIS...
THIS THING IS ALL
THAT'S LEFT OF
AL SIMMONS...

WHAT
AM I?
GOD HELP
ME...

**WHAT
AM I?**

**WHAT
HAVE YOU DONE
TO ME?**



OUR WORK IS
ACCOMPLISHED.

...HURTS...
IT HURTS...

...WHAT
HAVE YOU
DONE TO
ME?...

...AAHHH...

YOU ARE
OUR CREATURE
NOW. WE HAVE MADE
YOU STRONG AND
TERRIBLE SO THAT YOU
MAY GO BACK AND
DESTROY THE
HELLSPAWN.

THE
ELEMENTAL FIRE
OF HEAVEN BURNS
WITHIN YOU NOW. YOU
ARE NO LONGER
LIVING, NO LONGER
HUMAN.

RISE UP!
BE BORN
AGAIN!
SOLDIER OF
THE LIGHT!

ANTI-SPAWN!

AAAAHHH

N E X T
MALEBOIGIA
IS THE DEVIL!

ААААННН



N E X T
MALEBOIGIA
IS THE DEVIL!



®

SPAWN

®

image

17
JAN

DIGITAL
EDITION



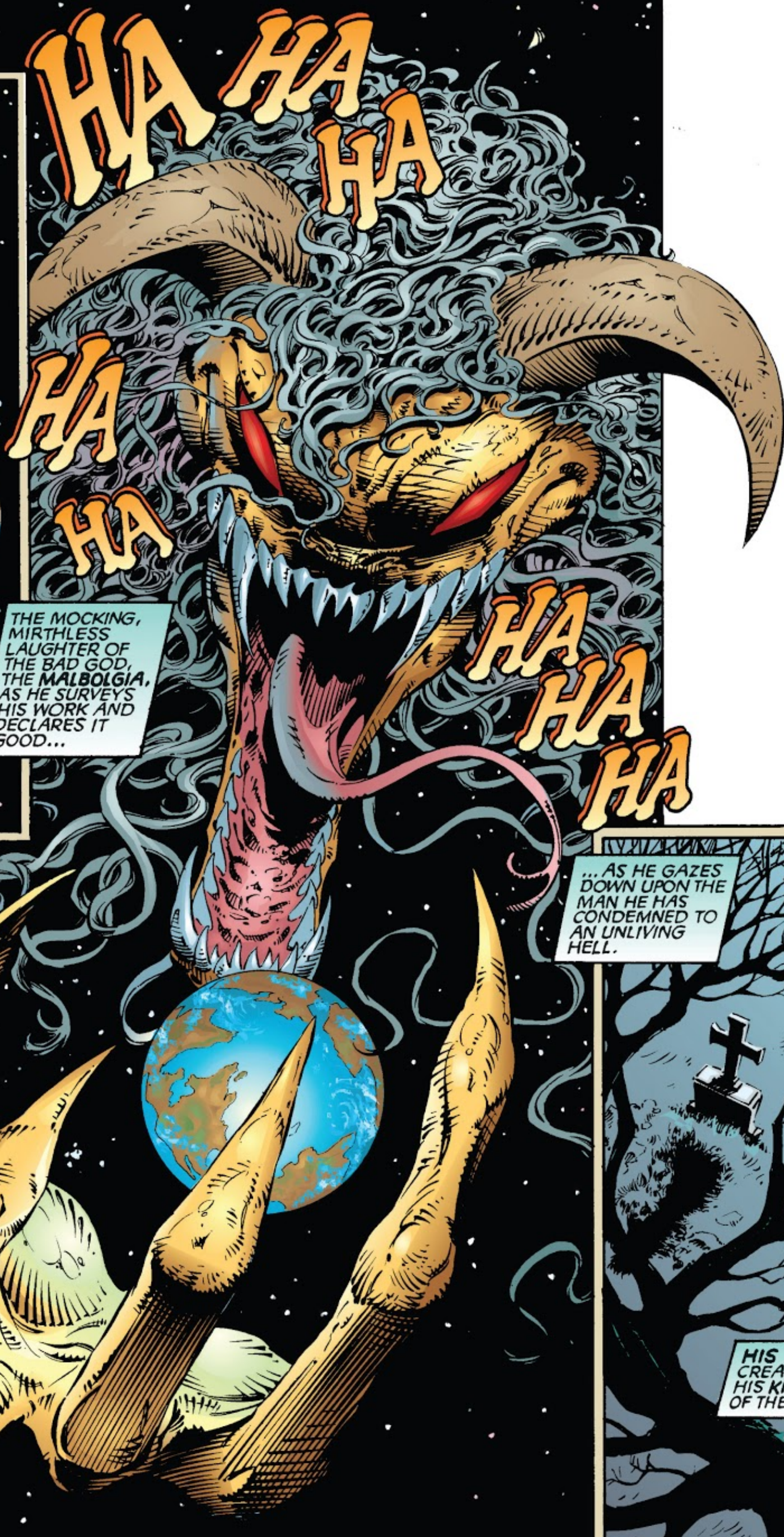
SOMEWHERE IN
TIME, THERE
IS LAUGHTER...

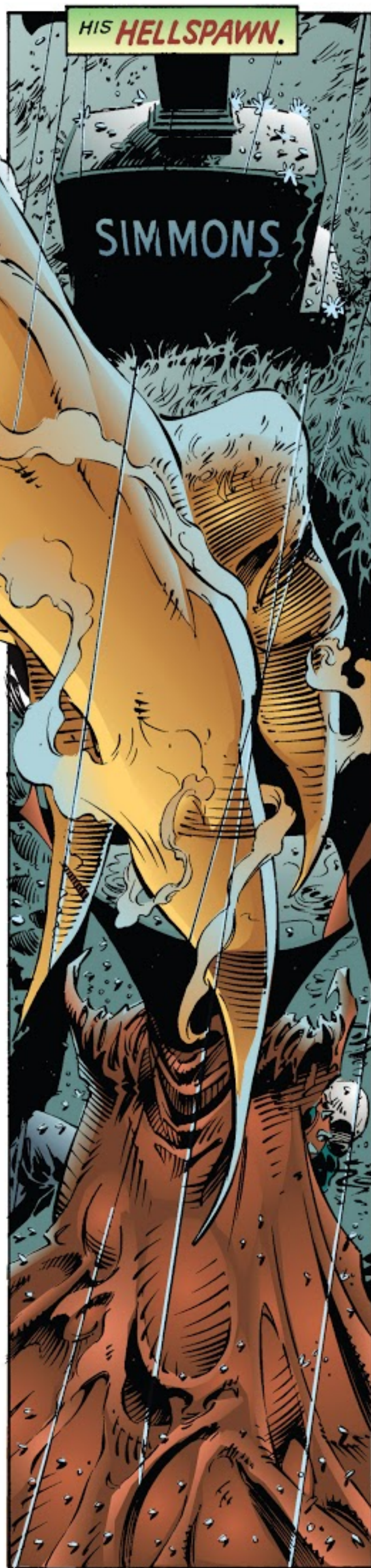


THE MOCKING,
MIRTHLESS
LAUGHTER OF
THE BAD GOD,
THE MALBOLGIA,
AS HE SURVEYS
HIS WORK AND
DECLARES IT
GOOD...

... AS HE GAZES
DOWN UPON THE
MAN HE HAS
CONDEMNED TO
AN UNLIVING
HELL.

HIS
CREATURE,
HIS KNIGHT
OF THE PIT...





HIS **HELLSPAWN**.

SIMMONS



Ah, my good and faithful servant, you're determined to learn a little more of the truth, I see.

I hope it hurts.

You've learned that the body you currently wear is not your earthly body, which lies decaying in this grave.

Now, let me show you something, my little Hellspawn. It may bring you understanding and me a moment's sport.

I HEAR A VOICE IN MY HEAD, THE VOICE I CAN NEVER FORGET, LIKE FINGER-NAILS GRATING ON A BLACK-BOARD.

I FEEL HIS COLD HAND AROUND MY SOUL, LIKE I'M DYING AGAIN...

POOF



AND SUDDENLY, I'M SOMEWHERE ELSE, AWAY FROM THE RAIN.

WHERE AM I?

This place is a doorway into my realm, a gate that stands open onto Hell. This particular portal occupies part of a military testing ground in Nevada.

Surely, you recognize what you see?

THIS STREET... I LIVED HERE WHEN I WAS A KID... THAT CHURCH IS WHERE I WAS MARRIED...

MY GOD, WHAT IS THIS PLACE?

How kind of you to call me God.

Hell is built of a substance your people have taken to calling psychoplasm, which adapts itself to human thoughts and fears.

When you died, your memories acted upon psychoplasm to create all of this.

Just as your new Spawn body is composed of psychoplasm and can change its shape, so too can this gateway assume the forms of any thoughts or emotions imprinted upon it.

Look! Do you remember that day on the lake, when you bent the knee and begged Wanda to marry you? How touching...

Not your wife, just a stray memory given flesh. But how such memories must sting when you think of her in the arms of another man!

Oh, I delight in the sweet, sad taste of your pain, little Hellspawn. For you, there can be only pain. I savor the bitterness of your tears on my tongue.

WANDA? NO, LEAVE HER OUT OF THIS...

NOT MY WIFE.

Noooooo

Each day, you are more my slave. It will not be long before you crawl towards my throne to take your place in my army.

I look forward to seeing you.

**HAHAHA
HAHA**

SOMEWHERE IN TIME, THERE IS LAUGHTER, BUT THE BAD GOD DOES NOT LAUGH ALONE. THERE IS ANOTHER SOUND IN THE AIRLESS DARK...

THE COLD LAUGHTER OF ANGELS.

IT IS DONE.

THE SOLDIER IS READY. OUR ANTI-SPAWN HAS BEEN PREPARED FOR HIS FIRST BATTLE.

THEN KEY HIM TO THE HELLSPAWN'S AURA PROFILE, INITIATE TRANSMISSION.

AND PRAY FOR A SWIFT KILL.

THERE IS A BRIEF SOUND, LIKE A CHOIR CATCHING ITS BREATH, AND A SILVER WHITE COMET EXPLODES DOWN THROUGH THE UPPER ATMOSPHERE.



WHERE
ARE YOU,
YOU
BASTARD
?!

YOU
TOOK MY
LIFE, YOU
TOOK MY
SOUL!

WHERE
ARE YOU?!
I...

WHOOSH

DON'T KNOW WHAT THE HELL
THAT WAS BUT MY SKIN'S
CRAWLING WITH STATIC.

THERE'S SOMETHING
IN THERE...

SOMETHING
BAD.

HELLSPAWN!

I'VE
COME
FOR
YOU!





...MEANWHILE, IN *WASHINGTON*, GOVERNMENT SOURCES ARE REFUSING TO CONFIRM OR DENY RUMORS ABOUT THE DIS-APPEARANCE OF CONTROVERSIAL PRESIDENTIAL ADVISOR *JASON WYNN*.

WYNN WAS SCHEDULED TO APPEAR IN A LIVE TELEVISION DEBATE EARLIER

KLIK



...CAN CALL ME A CRANK ALL THEY WANT BUT I SAY THE WHOLE WYNN DISAPPEARANCE STORY STINKS TO HIGH HEAVEN OF CONSPIRACY AND COVER-UP!

JUST WHAT *WERE* WYNN'S CONNECTIONS TO ALLEGED *YOUNGBLOOD* COVERT OPERATIONS AND ALL THOSE OTHER SNEAKY LITTLE DIRTY-TRICKS OUTINGS THAT NOBODY SEEMS TO WANT TO REPORT?

AND WHAT DID WYNN HAVE TO SAY ABOUT THE NEW INFORMATION THAT'S COME TO LIGHT WHICH SUGGESTS THAT *LT. COL. AL SIMMONS*, WHO DIED SIX YEARS AGO, MAY HAVE BEEN **MURDERED** BY HIS OWN PEOPLE?



KLIK

...BEST FOR YOUR DOG, BEST FOR YOUR POCKET.

WAS THAT SOMETHING ON THE NEWS ABOUT *AL*?

Uh... NOT REALLY. THEY'RE STILL TALKING ABOUT THIS JASON WYNN THING. I DIDN'T THINK YOU'D WANT TO HEAR IT AGAIN, WANDA ...





... FOR JASON WYNN
HAS BEEN REBORN
AS THE ANTI-SPAWN
AND STANDS FACE
TO FACE WITH HIS
OLD ADVERSARY,
AL SIMMONS--

--THOUGH
NEITHER
MAN
SUSPECTS.

I'VE COME
TO **DESTROY**
YOU,
HELLSPAWN.

YEAH?

YOU'RE
WELCOME
TO TRY.

SHRAAK



WHATEVER HE THROWS
AT ME, IT HITS LIKE A
FREIGHT TRAIN.

FEELS LIKE EVERYTHING
INSIDE ME JUST CAUGHT FIRE.
LIKE HOT GLASS AND ACID IN
MY VEINS. EVERYTHING SPINS
AND A WALL COMES UP
BEHIND ME. COLORS...

SHRASSSSSH



UNNH!

LIGHTNING
CRACKLING
DOWN MY
NERVOUS
SYSTEM.

I CAN SMELL
INCENSE AND OLD
WOOD... HURT BAD...
THIS IS WHERE WE
WERE MARRIED...
WANDA... BUT IT'S
NOT A CHURCH, IS
IT? ... JUST HELL
PRETENDING TO BE
A CHURCH...



GOD, I'M IN
AGONY!

AND THOSE
VOICES SURE AIN'T
CHOIRBOYS...

LOOKEE
HERE.
WHAT WE
GOT?

IS IT A
HELLSPAWN?
SMELLS LIKE A
HELLSPAWN.

IT'S A
HELLSPAWN
ALL RIGHT. NOT
SO HIGH AND
MIGHTY NOW,
IS HE?

LET'S SEE
HIM ORDER
US AROUND.

I GOT AN
IDEA. LET'S TAKE
HIS UNIFORM WHILE
IT'S STILL STUNNED.
NO REASON WHY WE
SHOULDN'T BE FINE
CAPTAINS IN
HELL'S ARMY.

WON'T THE
UNIFORM BE
BONDED TO
HIS NERVOUS
SYSTEM?

NOT
ONCE WE'VE
PEELED HIM
LIKE A

WHUMMP!



STAND
AWAY
FROM
HIM!

HE'S
MINE!

FILTH!
DO YOU
HEAR
ME?



HE'S
MINE!



EEF EEF

EEAAA

STINK OF BURNING
MEAT AND SULFUR.

WHO IS THIS GUY? NEVER
FACED SO MUCH RAW POWER.
WHAT THE HELL DOES HE WANT?

WHAT IF HE'S
STRONGER THAN ME?

AND HOW COME I FEEL
LIKE I KNOW HIM?

SEE?
SEE HOW THE
HOLY BURNING
LIGHT OF HEAVEN
DISPELS THE
DARKNESS?

NOW YOU,
HELLSPAWN.

I'LL
MAKE
YOU
SCREAM.



WHAT THE HELL'S GOIN' ON DOWN THERE IN SIMMONSVILLE?

I DON'T RIGHTLY KNOW, MAJOR VALE, SIR.

WE GOT ALARMS GOING OFF ALL OVER THE PLACE. WE'VE HAD TO PLACE AN EMERGENCY EXCLUSION ZONE AROUND THE WHOLE AREA.



WYNN'S VANISHED AND NOBODY KNOWS HOW OR WHERE.

I JUST GOT HERE, SOLDIER, AND ALREADY IT LOOKS TO ME LIKE THIS PROJECT'S FALLING APART AT THE SEAMS.



WYNN SAID THAT WAS A DOORWAY TO HELL DOWN THERE.

LOOKS TO ME LIKE ALL HELL JUST BROKE LOOSE, BOY.

WELL, THIS PROGRAM MEANS WAY TOO MUCH TO THE U.S. GOVERNMENT TO JUST LET IT ALL GO CRAZY. I'M GOIN' IN THERE, EXCLUSION ZONE OR NO GODDAMN EXCLUSION ZONE!

AND THERE AIN'T NOTHING ON EARTH OR IN HELL GONNA STOP ME, THAT'S FOR SURE!





I CAN'T
TAKE MUCH
MORE OF
THIS.

GOT TO
TRY AND
TAKE HIM
OUT.

SHRAAK!

GODDAMN!
I MISSED!

I MISSED
AND HE'S STILL
COMING.



THE NEXT
BLAST WILL
KILL ME.

GOTTA
GET OUT
OF HERE.

A SWITCH SNAPS
HOME IN MY BRAIN
AND I DISSOLVE
MY BODY.

EVERYTHING FALLS INWARD, LIKE A
COLLAPSING BALLOON. THE WORLD
BREAKS UP AND GOES OUT.

AND I'M
TRAVELLING.

A SHOTGUN BLAST THROUGH
UN-SPACE AT THE SPEED OF LIGHT.
STRESSED MOLECULES
SHRIEKING WITH SHOCK.

I'M NEVER GONNA BELIEVE
ANYTHING I SEE ON 'STAR TREK'
AGAIN; TELEPORTATION HURTS.



IT HURTS BAD.

AND, AS BEFORE, THE SPAWN IS DRAWN BACK, AS THOUGH BY SOME PSYCHIC MAGNET, TO THE LABYRINTHINE ALLEYWAYS OF THE BOWERY...

...TO THE PLACE HE CALLS HOME.

SO I SAYS
TO THE COP,
I SAYS...
HEY! LOOKIT
THIS
HERE!

WHATCHA
CALL
THAT?!

JEE-
ZUS!
IT'S THE
FOURTH
OF JULY!

GET AWAY...
ALL OF YOU...
HE MIGHT BE
ABLE TO
FOLLOW...

GET
AWAY!

IT'S THE
SPAWN!

YOU
DON'T
LOOK SO
GOOD, BIG
GUY...

NO!

GET
OUT
OF HERE!

GO!

IT CAN'T BE... HE
CAN'T HAVE
COME AFTER
ME SO SOON.

I NEED
MORE
TIME...

YOU
CAN'T
HIDE.

I CAN
TRACK YOU
THROUGH
TIME AND
SPACE, TO THE
ENDS OF THE
EARTH!

THERE'S
NOWHERE
TO RUN FROM
DEATH!

SKRAAAK

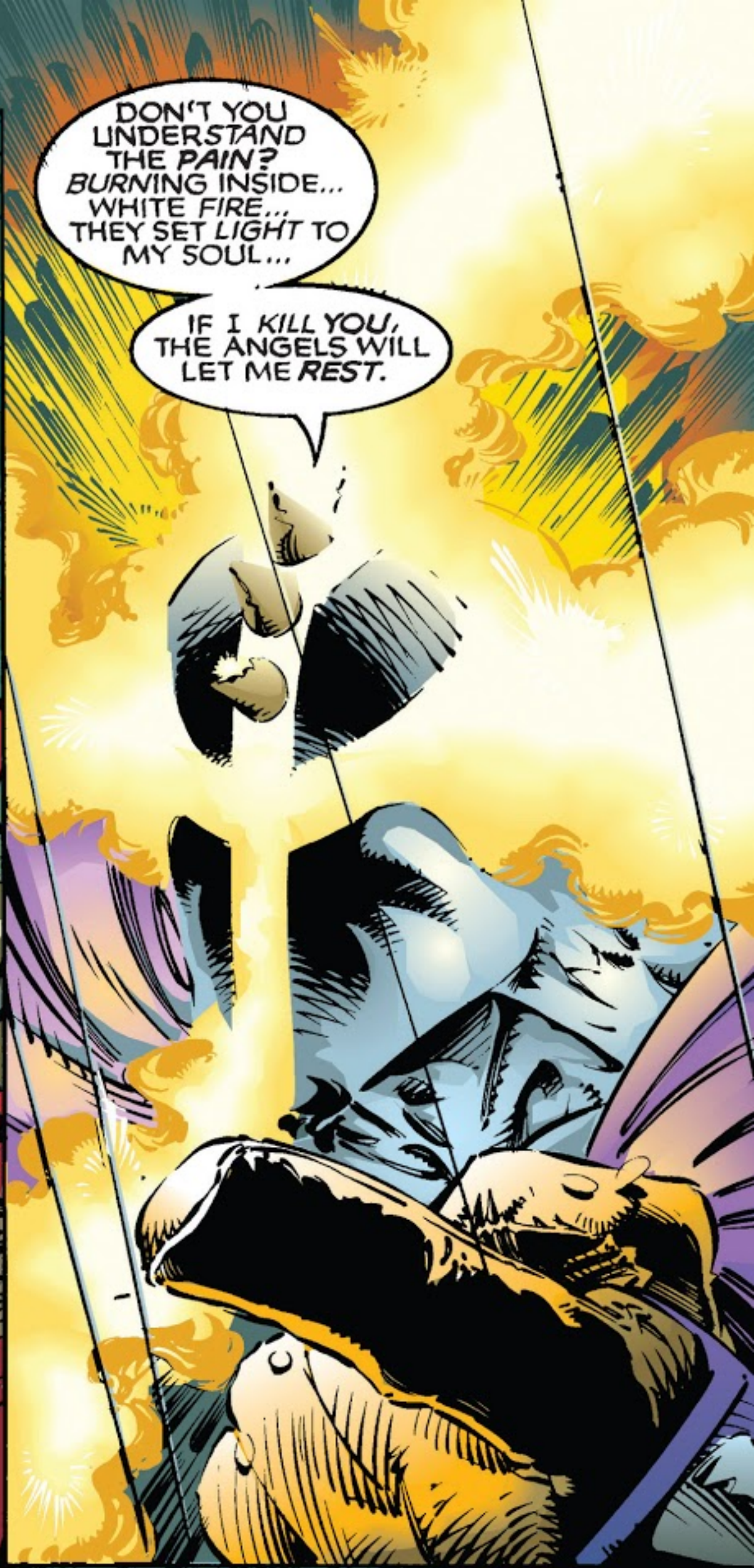
CAN'T SEE STRAIGHT...
EVERYTHING BROKEN UP
INSIDE. IS THAT BLOOD
IN MY EYES, OR...

... JESUS, THAT
NOISE... IT'S MY
COSTUME!
BLEEDING...
MOANING...

MY
COSTUME'S
ALIVE
AND HE'S
WOUNDED
IT...

DON'T YOU
UNDERSTAND
THE PAIN?
BURNING INSIDE...
WHITE FIRE...
THEY SET LIGHT TO
MY SOUL...

IF I KILL YOU,
THE ANGELS WILL
LET ME REST.



ANGELS?
WHAT'S HE
TALKING
ABOUT?



I'M LOSING
CONSCIOUSNESS.

CAN'T TAKE
ANOTHER...



SHRZZZZ

UUUUHHHH H



HEAD'S
FILLED WITH
LIGHT... I CAN'T
THINK STRAIGHT...
I JUST HAVE TO
KILL YOU...

THEN THE
FIRES WILL GO
OUT. I WAS A
MAN ONCE...
WAS I A MAN?
NOW I'M THE
FIERY SOLDIER
OF HEAVEN...
HEAVEN'S HUNTER,
HEAVEN'S HARRIER
AND YOU...



YOU'RE
JUST
PREY!



**TIME'S UP,
HELLSPAWN!**

